

THE EVOLUTION OF A LEADER: AN ASSESSMENT OF
MAJOR GENERAL GEORGE IZARD'S LEADERSHIP
IN THE WAR OF 1812

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE
Military History

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2015

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
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1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 12-06-2015		2. REPORT TYPE Master's Thesis		3. DATES COVERED (From - To) AUG 2014 – JUN 2015	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE The Evolution of a Leader: An Assessment of Major General George Izard's Leadership in the War of 1812				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) MAJ Edward F. Keen III, U.S. Army Reserve				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army Command and General Staff College ATTN: ATZL-SWD-GD Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-2301				8. PERFORMING ORG REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for Public Release; Distribution is Unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT Poor military and political leadership during the first two years of the War of 1812 resulted in two failed attempts by American armies to invade Canada. These disasters prompted the purging of incompetent and aging Revolutionary War veterans from the upper echelons of the army and their replacement with younger and more capable officers. In 1814, George Izard at 38 years old became one of the youngest major generals in U.S. Army history. The only general officer in the war to have received formal military training in Europe, expectations ran high that Major General Izard would turn the tide of the war in the American's favor. Despite his exemplary military performance in 1812 and 1813, Izard's generalship during the 1814 Niagara Campaign received criticism from contemporaries and historians for failing to act decisively. At the start of the campaign he found himself in command with uncoordinated and poorly communicated strategic objectives, a split command in the 9th Military District, and a Secretary of War attempting to control activities from Washington D.C. For these reasons, a deep analysis of Izard's performance is needed to determine whether his leadership furthered or hindered the strategic and operational goals of the theater of operations.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS George Izard; War of 1812; Leadership					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT	b. ABSTRACT	c. THIS PAGE			19b. PHONE NUMBER (include area code)
(U)	(U)	(U)	(U)	145	

Standard Form 298 (Rev. 8-98)
Prescribed by ANSI Std. Z39.18

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

THE EVOLUTION OF A LEADER: AN ASSESSMENT OF MAJOR GENERAL GEORGE IZARD'S LEADERSHIP IN THE WAR OF 1812, by MAJ Edward F. Keen III, 145 pages.

Poor military and political leadership during the first two years of the War of 1812 resulted in two failed attempts by American armies to invade Canada. These disasters prompted the purging of incompetent and aging Revolutionary War veterans from the upper echelons of the army and their replacement with younger and more capable officers. In 1814, George Izard at 38 years old became one of the youngest major generals in U.S. Army history. The only general officer in the war to have received formal military training in Europe, expectations ran high that Major General Izard would turn the tide of the war in the American's favor. Despite his exemplary military performance in 1812 and 1813, Izard's generalship during the 1814 Niagara Campaign received criticism from contemporaries and historians for failing to act decisively. At the start of the campaign he found himself in command with uncoordinated and poorly communicated strategic objectives, a split command in the 9th Military District, and a Secretary of War attempting to control activities from Washington D.C. For these reasons, a deep analysis of Izard's performance is needed to determine whether his leadership furthered or hindered the strategic and operational goals of the theater of operations.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Completing a project of this magnitude during a full-time academic program at the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) would not have been possible without the assistance of several people. First, I would like to thank my wife, Ann, for helping me to obtain copies of important documents from the National Archives. Much of Major General George Izard's early war correspondence with the Adjutant General's Office and War Department is unpublished, making her assistance essential for an in-depth analysis of his entire military career. I would also like to thank my son, Christopher, and daughter, Mary, for their patience and support while I researched and prepared this thesis.

A special thanks goes to the members of my thesis committee, Dr. Richard V. Barbuto, Dr. Terry Beckenbaugh, and Dr. Gregory Hospodor. I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to work with these distinguished historians and learned a great deal during the critical review of my thesis and the valuable discussions we had regarding its form and content. Dr. Barbuto freely shared his expert knowledge on the War of 1812 to guide the development of this project, helping me to expand my thinking on leadership and shaping the analysis of Major General George Izard's actions during the war.

I would also like to thank my CGSC teaching team for their assistance throughout the academic year, including Dr. Louis A. DiMarco, LTC Michael A. Harding, Mr. Gary Hobin, Mr. Robert J. Rielly, and Mr. Marc A. Wagner. Their devotion to professional military education and personal mentorship during the Core Curriculum and Advanced Operations Course helped me to succeed in my coursework, informed a good portion of my research, and greatly contributed to my development as an officer.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Without going back beyond the renewal in 1803 of the war in which Great Britain is engaged, and omitting unrepaired wrongs of inferior magnitude, the conduct of her Government presents a series of acts hostile to the United States as an independent and neutral nation.

— James Madison, *War Message to Congress* (June 1, 1812)

Poor military and political leadership during the first two years of the War of 1812 resulted in six failed attempts by American armies to invade Canada. These disasters prompted the purging of incompetent and aging Revolutionary War veterans from the upper echelons of the army and their replacement with younger and more capable officers. In 1814, George Izard at 38 years old became one of the youngest major generals in U.S. Army history.¹ The only general officer in the War of 1812 to have received formal military training in Europe, expectations ran high that Major General Izard would turn the tide of the war in the American's favor.

Despite his exemplary military performance as a commander in 1812 and 1813, Major General Izard's generalship during the Niagara Campaign of 1814 received criticism from contemporaries and historians alike for failing to act decisively. Was he an ineffective leader or did circumstances beyond his control influence the outcome? At the start of the campaign season he found himself in command with uncoordinated and poorly communicated strategic objectives, a split command, and a Secretary of War attempting to control activities from Washington D.C.² Major General Izard's failure to decisively engage the British and abandonment of Fort Erie at the end of the year caused such an uproar he offered President Madison his resignation.

Framework for Leadership Analysis

A leader is someone who serves in an assumed or appointed role that uses inspiration and influence to motivate members of a unit to accomplish its mission.³ A positive leader establishes the direction of an organization through their personal values, professional competence, and sound judgment while a negative leader can undermine unit morale and erode the confidence of their followers. Given the importance of leadership to the success of military operations, the primary purpose of this thesis is to determine if Major General Izard was an effective leader at the regimental, brigade, and division level throughout the War of 1812. It will also examine how well he transitioned from direct level to organizational level leadership when he assumed command of the Right Division in 1814. Another goal is to determine whether his generalship advanced or hindered strategic and operational goals in the northern theater of operations.⁴ The components of generalship used to assess Izard's effectiveness includes the quality and timeliness of his decisions, ability to motivate officers and soldiers, planning capability, ability to give clear orders, intellectual capacity, and decisiveness.

The U.S. Army's leadership requirements model, which defines leader attributes and competencies, serves as the framework for evaluating Izard's leadership.⁵ Attributes of "character," "presence," and "intellect" represent what a leader is and enables them to master the core leader competencies (see figure 1).⁶ A person's character is made up of their moral and ethical values, which helps to guide them to do what is right, legally and morally. Military and professional bearing, fitness, confidence, and resilience help a leader to effectively convey their presence. Possessing a commanding presence makes a

favorable impression on subordinates and motivates them to endure shared hardships.⁷

Leaders draw upon their intellect to solve complex problems and develop plans.

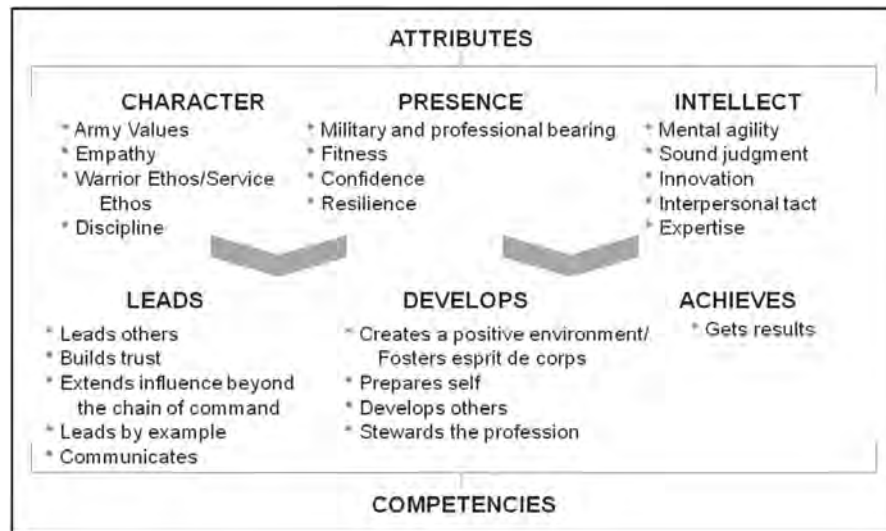


Figure 1. The Army Leadership Requirements Model

Source: Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Doctrine Reference Publication 6-22, *Army Leadership* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 1-5.

A combination of professional military education, self-development, and experience builds the competencies of “leads,” “develops,” and “achieves.” Leaders serve to lead others; develop themselves, subordinates, and the profession; and achieve results. These competencies apply across all levels of positions and form the basis for leading through change as a leader transitions from direct to organizational level positions.⁸

Direct leadership (team through company level) requires face-to-face leadership and involves tasks such as directing team efforts, establishing performance expectations, and providing clear mission intent.⁹ These leaders are more closely associated with day-to-day operations and exert influence over the organization directly or indirectly through

their subordinates. Mastering the basic competencies at the direct level of leadership enables leaders to progress to higher levels of responsibility. Organizational leaders (battalion through corps level) command larger numbers of people than direct level leaders. Due to the size of these organizations, organizational leaders provide influence more indirectly through multiple layers of subordinates. Examples of organizational leadership include vision setting, resource management, and empowering subordinates to accomplish the mission.¹⁰ Leaders at this level often deal with more complexity, uncertainty, and unintended consequences. A successful transition to the organizational level requires a leader to place previous experiences into the context of new challenges and identify leader competencies necessary for their continued development.

The research methodology for this thesis consisted of identifying and analyzing relevant primary source documentation. These sources included Major General Izard's memoirs, 1812 Adjutant General correspondence, 1813 Chateauguay Campaign journals, and 1814 Niagara Campaign correspondence with Secretaries of War John Armstrong and James Monroe. The correspondence of Major General Izard's subordinates, Major General Jacob Brown and Brigadier General Daniel Bissell, were reviewed for pertinent information. Secondary sources describing Izard's military career and campaign details for historical context were also included in the analysis.

Prelude to War: Political and Economic Issues

The War of 1812 represents one of the least understood wars in our nation's history. A mostly forgotten war, those who are familiar with the subject remember a few dramatic highlights such as the burning of the White House, composition of the Star Spangled Banner, or the Battle of New Orleans.¹¹ The multitude of complex political and

economic issues surrounding the decision to declare war contributes to this selective memory. Among the many disputes with Great Britain at the time, impressment of sailors and the rights of neutral nations dominated the list of American grievances leading up to the war.¹² The revolutionary wars of France mark the beginning of increasingly tense relations between the U.S. and Europe.

Recognizing the need for foreign support during the American Revolution, the Continental Congress charged Benjamin Franklin with negotiating an alliance with France. Initially hesitant to recognize U.S. independence after George Washington's retreat from New York in 1777, the French agreed to an alliance against Great Britain after the decisive victory at Saratoga later in the year. The resulting Treaty of Alliance and Treaty of Amity and Commerce, with both documents signed in February 1778, formed a mutual assistance agreement in case of conflict with Great Britain and established a commercial alliance.¹³ According to the terms of the treaty, the U.S. should have rendered assistance to Revolutionary France when Britain joined the War of the First Coalition in 1793. To prevent America from becoming entangled in the European conflict, then President George Washington issued a Proclamation of Neutrality.¹⁴

Although the French took issue with American neutrality, British naval dominance prevented them from mounting a significant protest. They did, however, expect the U.S. to conduct its commercial policies in a way that would counter the Royal Navy's attempts to restrict French commerce.¹⁵ Great Britain reacted quickly to French attempts to circumvent the blockade by seizing American merchantmen in the Caribbean suspected of carrying neutral cargo. British admiralty courts operating in the West Indies confiscated captured merchant vessels and impressed American seamen into Royal Navy

service under the “Rule of 1756”.¹⁶ Codified during the colonial wars between Britain and France, the Rule of 1756 stipulated that commerce not permitted during peacetime, i.e. colonial systems that normally excluded foreign shipping, is not permissible during wartime to avoid British naval supremacy.¹⁷ These events precipitated a crisis in the winter of 1793-1794 as many in the U.S. clamored for war with Great Britain.

Hoping to avoid a conflict, President Washington dispatched Supreme Court Chief Justice John Jay to London in an attempt to defuse the crisis. These negotiations resulted in the Anglo-American agreement known as the Jay Treaty (1794), which regulated commerce between the two nations and defined the rights of neutral nations in a time of war. Republican opponents of the Jay Treaty criticized it for abandoning an important concept of American commercial policy, that neutral ships made neutral cargo, and gave the Royal Navy greater latitude to seize shipments they considered contraband.¹⁸ Despite these concessions, the agreement ushered in an era of peaceful relations with the British. It temporarily prevented an alliance between the British and Native Americans in the American Northwest, hastened their evacuation of forts along the St. Lawrence River, and led to rapid economic growth with the value of American exports tripling from 1794 to 1801.¹⁹ While the treaty reduced tensions between the U.S. and Great Britain it had the unintended consequence of increasing them with France.

France viewed the Jay Treaty as a betrayal of the Franco-American alliance of 1778. In response to the treaty, they severed diplomatic relations and authorized privateers to interdict U.S. commerce with Britain. With economic losses mounting, President John Adams sent Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, John Marshall, and Elbridge Gerry to France in July 1797 to negotiate an end to hostilities with the Foreign Minister,

the Marquis de Talleyrand. In what became known as the “XYZ Affair”, the French intermediaries demanded a low interest loan to France, reimbursement of French shipping losses, and a substantial bribe to Talleyrand.²⁰ Public outrage at the treatment of the American envoys led Congress to annul the Treaty of Alliance and Treaty of Amity and Commerce with France in 1798 and the beginning of the Quasi-War.²¹ Hoping to avoid an escalation of the limited naval engagements being fought in the Caribbean, Talleyrand signaled to the U.S. that France would accept a new delegation. The resulting Convention of 1800 brought an end to hostilities and formally rescinded the Treaty of Alliance.²²

Federalist policies under President Adams, such as the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798, attempted to contain the rise of the Republican Party but in 1801 their supporters succeeded in electing Thomas Jefferson to the presidency. Once they gained power, the Republicans set about reversing many of the policies of their predecessors, which coincided with a temporary end to hostilities between Great Britain and France. During this period of peace, the Republicans reduced the size of the military and allowed many of the controversial components of the Jay Treaty to expire.²³ When the war in Europe resumed in 1803 the issues of neutral shipping and impressment quickly became a source of friction between the U.S. and Great Britain.

Windfall profits due to the American re-export trade between France and its colonies led Great Britain to reassess Rule of 1756 enforcement through the *Essex* decision of 1805. American merchants routinely circumvented the Rule of 1756 by stopping over at U.S. ports with cargo bound for France or its West Indies colonies.²⁴ While carrying cargo between Barcelona, Spain and Havana, Cuba with a stopover in Salem, Massachusetts, the American merchant vessel *Essex* was seized by the Royal

Navy and hauled before a British prize court.²⁵ Declaring the *Essex* in violation of the Rule of 1756, the decision officially made the re-export trade illegal and rendered any American ships engaged in the practice subject to forfeiture.

Impressment of seamen taken from American ships was another major grievance between the U.S. and Great Britain. As American maritime trade grew in the years leading up to the War of 1812, so did the demand for experienced sailors. With the prospect of better pay and working conditions, British subjects regularly volunteered for service on American merchant ships. Estimates from the time period suggest that nearly 30 percent of the 70,000 seamen employed on American vessels were born in the British Empire.²⁶ Unfortunately, the Royal Navy also needed able-bodied seamen to fill the growing need of warships to blockade Europe. British press gangs regularly boarded American vessels to retrieve British subjects. Upwards of 6,000 Americans found themselves pressed into service on British ships until their citizenship was verified; a process that could take years.²⁷ Violation of American sovereignty through this practice caused outrage among the population and generated calls for action from the government.

The Jefferson administration debated the form of action to take against British transgressions during the winter and spring of 1805 to 1806. Reductions in the armed forces enacted by the Republicans made a military option less feasible so they decided instead to use economic coercion through the Non-Importation Act of 1806.²⁸ This relatively mild piece of legislation called for the ban of only certain British imports, excluding items such as textiles and metal goods that comprised the majority of U.S. import items from Great Britain.²⁹ Further weakening the Non-Importation Act was the provision delaying its implementation for nine months to allow for a diplomatic

resolution to the crisis. President Jefferson acquiesced to Senate calls for diplomacy and dispatched William Pinkney to join James Monroe, the American minister to the British government, in London for negotiations.

Diplomatic instructions given to Monroe and Pinkney directed them to resolve problems caused by the *Essex* decision and persuade the British to repudiate the practice of impressment.³⁰ Replacement of the Tory government led by William Pitt the Younger with a Whig government more sympathetic to the American cause led by Charles James Fox increased the likelihood of a favorable outcome for the delegation. The British saw impressment as necessary to maintain operational effectiveness of the Royal Navy due to wholesale desertion. To them, impressment was a matter of national security and they refused to end its practice. They would, however, exercise caution and offer prompt redress to Americans improperly pressed into service.³¹ The British were willing to compromise on the re-import trade issue by not interfering with American ships carrying non-contraband cargo as long as they paid a small transit duty in American ports. Not only were these duties smaller than those normally charged, but the British also conceded a more narrow definition of contraband, agreed to lower duties on American ships in British ports, and would reimburse merchants detained in violation of the treaty.³²

The Whig government signed the Monroe-Pinkney Treaty in December 1806 and sent it back to the U.S. for review by the President. Failure to include a provision banning impressment immediately dampened his enthusiasm for the document and he refused to submit it to the Senate for ratification.³³ Jefferson refused to give up economic coercion as a tool to influence diplomatic relations if the British would not yield on impressment. Rejection of the Monroe-Pinkney Treaty by the President resulted in a missed

opportunity to adopt an Anglo-American accord similar to the Jay Treaty.³⁴

Unfortunately, the return of the Tories in 1807, maritime incidents, and commercial restrictions imposed by Britain and France in their ongoing conflict would make diplomatic resolution of disagreements much more difficult.

Napoleon Bonaparte's stunning victories over the Austrians and Russians at the Battle of Austerlitz in 1805 and Prussians at the Battles of Jena and Auerstedt in 1806 resulted in France dominating much of the European continent. Unable to challenge Great Britain at sea after suffering defeat at Trafalgar, Napoleon issued the Berlin Decree on November 21, 1806 to block its commerce from Europe.³⁵ In response, the British government issued an Order in Council on January 7, 1807 barring neutral trade between all enemy ports. Orders in Council issued in November 1807 expanded this list to include enemy ports, their colonies, and any country that excluded British commerce. Napoleon responded in kind with the Milan Decree in December 1807, announcing that France would view any vessel obeying the Orders in Council as British property and subject to forfeiture. The British and French pronouncements severely restricted American commerce and the ensuing property seizures by both sides increased resentment.

Following the rejection of the Monroe-Pinkney Treaty, relations between the U.S. and Great Britain continued to deteriorate. On June 22, 1807, the *Chesapeake* affair would so incense the American public that it created a war scare.³⁶ On this date the British warship H.M.S. *Leopard* demanded to search for deserters aboard the American frigate *Chesapeake* nine miles off the U.S. coast. When the American commander refused the *Leopard* fired three broadsides at the *Chesapeake*, killing three crewmembers and wounding 16 others.³⁷ After having four suspected deserters removed from the

disabled ship, the *Chesapeake* limped back into port. Considered an act of war, the *Chesapeake* affair caused a riot in Norfolk, Virginia and the mustering of state militias. President Jefferson managed to calm the war fever and endeavored to use economic coercion to force Great Britain and France to respect American rights.

In December 1807 Jefferson persuaded Congress to pass the Embargo Act, which prevented American vessels from departing for foreign ports.³⁸ By his rationale, these measures would reduce the number of Americans at risk for impressment and at the same time encourage a shift in British policy towards neutral countries as the embargo damaged their economies. Unfortunately, the Embargo Act did more damage to the American economy than those of Great Britain or France. The embargo became more and more difficult to enforce as frustrated merchants ran the blockade and enterprising entrepreneurs took advantage of overland routes into Canada to smuggle goods in and out of the country. With trade revenues drying up and public resentment growing, the Congressional Republicans repealed the Embargo Act and replaced it with the Non-Intercourse Law of March 1809 that restricted trade only with Great Britain and France. It also had the proviso that if either nation abandoned their practices, the President could restore trade with that country.

At first it appeared that the strategy of pitting Great Britain against France would bring about a favorable outcome. David Erskine, the British minister to the U.S., negotiated an agreement with Secretary of State Robert Smith to exempt American merchants from the Orders in Council. President Madison embraced the agreement and proclaimed the U.S. would open trade with Great Britain April 19, 1809.³⁹ The administration would later learn that Erskine toned down the instructions from London

when Foreign Secretary George Canning repudiated the agreement in July. Caught in an awkward dilemma, President Madison reinstated the Non-Intercourse Act against Great Britain in August 1809. This humiliating reversal led to such resentment that relations between the two nations never recovered before the outbreak of war.

When Congress returned to session they set about replacing the expiring Non-Intercourse Act with legislation that targeted Britain and France without being as injurious to the U.S. economy. Foregoing any more attempts to deal with the matter diplomatically, Congress passed Macon's Bill No. 2 in May 1810.⁴⁰ This law allowed American trade with European belligerents without restriction; however, if Britain or France repealed their restrictive measures, the U.S. would implement non-intercourse against the other if they failed to do the same. Sensing an opportunity to drive America and Great Britain closer to war, Napoleon directed his foreign minister to inform John Armstrong, the American minister to France, that he would repeal the Berlin and Milan decrees by November 1810 if the U.S. forced the British to respect American neutrality. Napoleon continued to seize American vessels while the exact status of the decrees was unclear. Doubting that Napoleon ever intended to repeal his decrees, Great Britain signaled the Orders in Council would remain in effect as long as he dominated Europe.

An outbreak of war in 1811 between settlers in the Old Northwest and local Native American tribes was another issue causing friction between the U.S. and Great Britain. Although the British tried to restrain their Native American allies at times, most Americans blamed the British for uprisings that occurred because they provided the tribes with supplies to keep them loyal in case war broke out with the U.S. William Henry Harrison, the governor of the Indiana Territory, assembled an army of 1,000 regulars and

militia to respond to the latest round of depredations.⁴¹ Although Harrison's force had twice as many casualties as the enemy at the Battle of Tippecanoe on November 7, 1811, he claimed victory because they were driven from the field. Native American attacks continued despite the battle and the settlers increasingly blamed the British since they provided them with weapons.

Recognizing that an American response limited to trade restrictions would no longer be adequate to satisfy political pressures at home, President Madison summoned the Twelfth Congress to an early session on November 4, 1811 to discuss war preparations.⁴² In his annual message the President indicated his intention to go to war if the British retained their current policies. By March 1812 the Congress had passed legislation expanding the army and the tax system used to fund these preparations. Congress then passed a resolution calling for a 90-day embargo to protect American vessels from seizure and summoned all members to Washington D.C. by June 1, 1812. The President's war message was delivered to Congress that day and it had received approval by both chambers by June 17. With President Madison's signature on June 19, 1812, the U.S. officially declared war on Great Britain and its dependencies.

The American Military Establishment 1784-1812

The presence of a permanent British military force in North America following the French and Indian War (1763) led most Americans to view them as an army of occupation. In order to coordinate the military efforts of the thirteen colonies, the Continental Congress authorized the formation of the Continental Army on June 14, 1775. Built on the eighteenth century European model, the army consisted of long-term enlistments, sharp divisions between officers and enlisted soldiers, and specialized staff

departments responsible for supply.⁴³ As the war neared its conclusion, the Continental Congress appointed a committee headed by Alexander Hamilton to develop a system for military and naval establishment. Recognizing the limitation of militia forces, Hamilton and his principal advisors recommended the creation of a regular army and navy, a system of coastal fortifications, and the establishment of a military academy.

The Continental Congress disbanded the Continental Army when the American Revolution officially ended with the Peace of Paris in 1783. By January 1784 demobilization left 600 soldiers to guard stores leftover at West Point, NY and Springfield, MA, and occupy New York City until civilian control was re-established.⁴⁴ Despite its misgivings, the Confederation Congress recognized the need for a peacetime military to exert federal control into the trans-Appalachian Northwest and authorized a 700-man force on June 3, 1784.⁴⁵ A compromise measure, the Confederation system called for states to appoint officers and recruit soldiers with an enlistment period limited to one year. The force originally consisted of one regiment of seven infantry and two artillery companies led by 37 officers and commanded by a lieutenant colonel.⁴⁶ Congress authorized enlistment terms of three years in 1785 and tripled the authorized strength in 1786 to respond to Shay's Rebellion in Massachusetts. After the crisis Congress reduced the size of the force so that by 1789 a force of 46 officers and fewer than 700 enlisted soldiers occupied a string of forts along the Ohio River frontier.⁴⁷

Ratification of the Constitution in 1789 and a series of humiliating defeats by Native American tribes of the northwestern frontier in 1790 and 1791 led to changes in the size and organization of the army. After these defeats a more empowered Congress increased the size of the army to five regiments and added an artillery battalion and light

dragoon squadron for a total of 5,424 soldiers.⁴⁸ They later replaced the regimental system with the “American Legion” force structure consisting of four combined arms sub-legions. Major General Anthony Wayne proved the effectiveness of this new army by defeating a Native American force at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794. The increasing frequency of trade disputes with Great Britain and resulting war scares would lead to further increases in the size of the army and overall military spending.

Federalists in power during the 1790s pursued a pro-British foreign policy abroad while increasing military preparedness at home. They implemented financial and military reforms designed to deter aggression and defend the nation if war became unavoidable. Guided by Alexander Hamilton, the United States assumed state and Continental government Revolutionary War debts totaling \$75 million, implemented tariffs and duties, and created a national bank.⁴⁹ These measures allowed for the establishment of a stable national currency, restored public credit, and made millions of dollars available for capital investment. Economic growth and financial stability allowed the Federalists to pay for army expansion, naval ship construction, and coastal fortifications.⁵⁰ An end to the Native American conflict out west and signing of the Jay Treaty in 1795 ended military expansion as the Republicans gained more power in Congress.

Advocates of limited government and opposed to internal taxation, Democratic Republicans saw a large standing army as a potential source of tyranny and unnecessary expense. They initially called for drastic cuts in the army’s authorized strength but compromised with the pro-military Federalists on a measure in May 1796 that called for moderate reductions and did away with the legionary force structure.⁵¹ Now the army consisted of 3,359 officers and enlisted soldiers in four understrength infantry regiments,

the Corps of Artillerists and Engineers, and two light dragoon squadrons. During the debates the Washington administration laid out the rationale for maintaining a standing army: to man fortifications along the coast and borders with Canada and Spanish territories, maintain peace between settlers and Native Americans, and serve as a nucleus for a larger force in case of a major war.

The reduction of 1796 represented an important milestone because the army no longer needed a crisis to justify its existence.⁵² More importantly, the 1796 act provided the foundation of American military policy for the next century. In this model, the army was comprised of a small number of units that manned frontier outposts, an artillery and engineer corps to man coastal fortifications and train incoming officers, and a small cavalry force to patrol and secure communications.⁵³ Although the tactics and overall size of the army would increase to meet the garrison demands of an expanding territory, its basic structure would not change. Each war or crisis would spark debate about reorganizing the peacetime army, but after the conflict ended or the situation resolved itself the army would return to the basic 1796 model.

The Quasi-War with France in 1798 prompted the next round of changes to U.S. military structure. Recognizing the need to send a strong message to America's potential enemies abroad and Republican opponents at home, President Adams and the Federalists in Congress expanded the army and navy, and founded the U.S. Marine Corps. Military legislation established plans to raise a 10,000 man provisional army in case of invasion, created 12 new regiments of infantry, six companies of light dragoons, and expanded the size of existing regiments.⁵⁴ These measures increased the army from 3,359 to more than 14,000 officers and enlisted. Federalists in power at the time, most notably Alexander

Hamilton, hoped that this newly expanded force would become a permanent army to strengthen the federal government and increase American prestige.

President Adams convinced George Washington, who had only recently retired to Mount Vernon, to accept appointment as lieutenant general of the army in July 1798. Politically outmaneuvered, Adams reluctantly appointed Alexander Hamilton, a Federalist Party rival, as the inspector general of the army with a rank of major general.⁵⁵ Major General Hamilton immediately set about reforming the army into a more efficient force from the headquarters he established at his residence in New York City. He reformed the military bureaucracy to rationalize standards through formal regulations, instituted staff reforms in an effort to bring uniformity to the army's central command structure, and organized an elaborate medical department.⁵⁶ Settlement of the Quasi-War with France in 1800 prevented Major General Hamilton from implementing all of his proposed reforms. Without a justification for maintaining such a large standing army, President Adams seized the opportunity to strike back at his political foe by siding with Congressional Republicans to reduce the size of the force. On May 14, 1800, Congress abolished the expanded army by reducing it back to pre-1798 levels while retaining the second regiment of artillerists and engineers.⁵⁷

Thomas Jefferson's election in 1801 ensured the Republicans would institute deeper cuts to the military as they fulfilled their campaign pledge to reduce government spending. Although they were opposed to the idea of a large standing army in principle, repeal of internal taxes and a devotion of larger sums of revenue towards paying off the national debt necessitated a reduction in forces. To that end, Congress lowered the end strength of the peacetime army from 5,400 to 3,300 soldiers in 1802.⁵⁸ Naval readiness

steadily declined during this time period. Shipbuilding never resumed after the end of the Quasi-War and Republicans removed all frigates from the service. For national defense, Republicans put their faith in the militia, forces deemed more appropriate for a republic, and privateers to attack enemy commerce. They did increase spending on coastal fortifications (\$2.8 million from 1801 to 1812); however the lack of a sufficient navy left most coastal cities vulnerable to attack.

The Military Peace Establishment Act of 1802 also converted regiments of artillerists and engineers into a regiment of artillerists and corps of engineers. It directed the corps of engineers to locate its headquarters at West Point where it would form a military academy supervised by the highest ranking engineer officer.⁵⁹ In 1802, the administration selected Major Jonathan Williams to serve as the head of the military academy. Major Williams served as a purchasing agent in France during the American Revolution and modeled the military academy on the prestigious École Polytechnique located near Paris.⁶⁰ Having an intense and enduring interest in science and technology, he served as the secretary of the American Philosophical Society and later went on to found the Military Philosophical Society. Major Williams' advocacy for the corps of engineers as "the most elevated branch of military science" often brought him into conflict with the artillery garrison co-located on the grounds of West Point.

French victories at Austerlitz and Jena in 1805 and 1806, generated interest in adopting French methods of warfare. Up until this point, the only formal system for training troops in the U.S. was instituted by General Baron von Steuben during the American Revolution. His *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States* or "Blue Book" as it became known, dominated training and deployment of

militia and regular forces for decades.⁶¹ In 1810, Secretary of War William Eustis commissioned two translations of the French regulations and an abridged version of the French discipline system to serve as a simplified version for use by U.S. field armies.

The first translation, *Regulations for the Field Exercise, Manoeuvres, and Conduct of the Infantry of the United States* by Colonel Alexander Smyth was completed, field tested, and adopted in March 1812.⁶² Failures during the first year of the war and its lack of popularity among American officers for being a simplistic and abridged version of the French regulations led to its replacement by Lieutenant Colonel William Duane's *A Hand Book for Infantry* in 1813. While implementation of either regulation only applied to the regular army, Steuben's Blue Book remained the official regulation guiding militia units. This dichotomy resulted in problems with combining regular army and militia forces during the war since both were using different standards and schemes of maneuver.

Following the 1802 reduction, the army served in a number of different capacities during the Jefferson administration. Officers mediated Native American and settler relations, provided civil administration to lands acquired in the Louisiana Purchase, and served as principal representatives of the federal government in western territories.⁶³ As the war in Europe continued to rage and U.S. tensions with Great Britain and France increased, the Republicans began to mute their opposition to a larger peacetime army. In response to the *Chesapeake* affair, Congress tripled the authorized end strength of the army in 1808 to 10,000 soldiers.⁶⁴ Volunteers were limited to five years of service in the hopes that Republicans could reduce the size of the army after the war scare.

Similar to previous expansions, the army suffered from acute recruiting shortfalls and the flood of inexperienced officers strained the military bureaucracy. Republicans

took advantage of the expanding officer corps to dilute Federalist influence and reward the party faithful.⁶⁵ The combination of incompetent officers and an administrative system unable to cope with the logistical burdens led to disaster in 1809. Brigadier General James Wilkinson was sent to the newly acquired Louisiana territory to strengthen its defenses against a possible British attack. A combination of poor leadership, miscommunication, and disease caused 500 to 1,000 deaths among a force of 2,500.⁶⁶ As tensions with Great Britain increased through the early months of 1812, War Hawk Republicans added 13 new regiments to the army.⁶⁷ The U.S. entered the war with an understrength army led by a mediocre officer corps divided by politics. Like many other former officers, George Izard reentered the army as a part of this last minute expansion.

¹ John C. Fredriksen, "A Tempered Sword, Untested: The Military Career of General George Izard Part I," *The Journal of America's Military Past* 25, no. 2 (Fall 1998): 6.

² Richard V. Barbuto, *Niagara 1814: America Invades Canada* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2000), 311.

³ Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 6-22, *Army Leadership* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 1.

⁴ Barbara W. Tuchman, "Generalship," *Parameters* 2, no. 2 (1972): 2-11.

⁵ Headquarters, Department of the Army, Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 6-22, *Army Leadership* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 1-5.

⁶ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADP 6-22, 6.

⁷ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-22, 4-1.

⁸ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADP 6-22, 7.

⁹ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-22, 2-4-2-5.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 2-5.

¹¹ Donald R. Hickey, *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict, Bicentennial Edition* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 1-2.

¹² Clifford L. Egan, "The Origins of the War of 1812: Three Decades of Historical Writing," *Military Affairs* 38, no. 2 (April 1974): 72.

¹³ United States, 1778, Treaty of Alliance with France, February 6, *US Statutes at Large* 8, pg. 6; United States, 1778, Treaty of Amity and Commerce with France, February 6, *US Statutes at Large* 8, pg. 12.

¹⁴ Washington's reasoning for rejecting aid to Revolutionary France was that the government the United States negotiated the treaty with, the government of Louis XVI, was no longer in power. George Washington, *Proclamation 4 - Neutrality of the United States in the War Involving Austria, Prussia, Sardinia, Great Britain, and the United Netherlands Against France* (April 22, 1793), accessed October 4, 2014, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=65475>.

¹⁵ J. C. A. Stagg, *The War of 1812: Conflict for a Continent* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 24.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ David S. Heidler and Jeane T. Heidler, *The War of 1812* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), 19.

¹⁸ Stagg, *The War of 1812*, 25.

¹⁹ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 6; Stagg, *The War of 1812*, 26.

²⁰ U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, "The XYZ Affair and the Quasi-War with France, 1798–1800," accessed October 4, 2014, <http://history.state.gov/milestones/1784-1800/xyz>.

²¹ United States, 1798, Annulment of Treaties with France, July 7, U.S. Statues at Large 8, pg. 578.

²² United States, 1800, Convention between the French Republic and the United States of America, September 30, U.S. Statues at Large 8, pg. 178.

²³ Stagg, *The War of 1812*, 27.

²⁴ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 10.

²⁵ Heidler and Heidler, *The War of 1812*, 20.

²⁶ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 11. There was also conflict over U.S. Naturalization. If a subject of the British Empire became a U.S. citizen through the Naturalization

process, the British refused to acknowledge that process and still considered them a subject of the crown.

- ²⁷ Ibid.
- ²⁸ Heidler and Heidler, *The War of 1812*, 21.
- ²⁹ Stagg, *The War of 1812*, 31.
- ³⁰ Heidler and Heidler, *The War of 1812*, 22.
- ³¹ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 14.
- ³² Ibid.
- ³³ Heidler and Heidler, *The War of 1812*, 22.
- ³⁴ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 15.
- ³⁵ Heidler and Heidler, *The War of 1812*, 26.
- ³⁶ John K. Mahon, *The War of 1812* (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 1972), 3.
- ³⁷ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 16.
- ³⁸ Stagg, *The War of 1812*, 33.
- ³⁹ Heidler and Heidler, *The War of 1812*, 31.
- ⁴⁰ Stagg, *The War of 1812*, 36.
- ⁴¹ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 22.
- ⁴² Stagg, *The War of 1812*, 39.
- ⁴³ William B. Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms: The Army Officer Corps, 1784-1861* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 4.
- ⁴⁴ Richard H. Kohn, *Eagle and Sword: the Federalists and the Creation of the Military Establishment in America, 1783-1802* (New York: Free Press, 1975), 41.
- ⁴⁵ Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 4.
- ⁴⁶ Ibid.
- ⁴⁷ Ibid., 5.

- ⁴⁸ Ibid.
- ⁴⁹ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 5-6.
- ⁵⁰ Kohn, *Eagle and Sword*, 174.
- ⁵¹ Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 6.
- ⁵² Ibid., 7.
- ⁵³ Kohn, *Eagle and Sword*, 186.
- ⁵⁴ Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 7.
- ⁵⁵ Kohn, *Eagle and Sword*, 234-238.
- ⁵⁶ Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 96-97.
- ⁵⁷ Kohn, *Eagle and Sword*, 256-273. Adams was deeply suspicious of Hamilton's motives for proposing reforms. He feared that Hamilton wished to use the expanded Army to go after the Republicans. Historians continue to debate Hamilton's true motives.
- ⁵⁸ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 8.
- ⁵⁹ Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 98.
- ⁶⁰ Ibid., 102.
- ⁶¹ Michael A. Bonura, "French Thought and the American Military Mind: A History of French Influence on the American Way of War from 1814 through 1941" (PhD diss., Florida State University, 2008), 39-41, accessed September 14, 2014, <http://diginole.lib.fsu.edu/etd/3548/>.
- ⁶² Ibid., 42-44.
- ⁶³ Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 8.
- ⁶⁴ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 8.
- ⁶⁵ Theodore J. Crackel, *Mr. Jefferson's Army: Political and Social Reform of the Military Establishment, 1801-1809* (New York: New York University Press, 1987), 169.
- ⁶⁶ Mary C. Gillett, *The Army Medical Department, 1775-1818* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1981), 140-143.
- ⁶⁷ Skelton, *An American Profession of Arms*, 9.

CHAPTER 2

EARLY LIFE AND THE SECOND REGIMENT OF ARTILLERY

The acquisition of Canada this year, as far as the neighborhood of Quebec, will be a mere matter of marching; & will give us experience for the attack of Halifax the next, & the final expulsion of England from the American continent.

— Thomas Jefferson, Letter to William Duane (August 4, 1812)

Generalship requires the qualities of character, including personal leadership, and professional capacity.¹ The early life experiences and education of a person can have a profound effect on the development of these skills. This chapter seeks to explore George Izard's leadership and professional capacity characteristics during childhood, formal schooling period in the United States, and military education in Europe. The analysis will continue with his return to the U.S. and initial assignments as an officer in the Regiment of Artillerists and Engineers. The chapter concludes with an examination of Izard's reappointment in the military and service as colonel of the Second Regiment of Artillery.

Early Life and Education of George Izard

George Izard was born in Richmond, near London, England on October 21, 1776 to Ralph Izard and Alice de Lancey. As the son of a wealthy, patriot South Carolina father and mother from an influential New York family, George Izard's connections afforded him excellent educational opportunities at home and abroad.² Ralph Izard regularly conducted personal and diplomatic business in Europe and the family was in Great Britain settling its estate in Worcestershire at the time of George's birth.³ The hostilities created by the Declaration of Independence compelled the Izards to secure passage from Great Britain to Paris where Ralph Izard negotiated American affairs with

France and Holland. According to his earliest recollection, George Izard's formal education began at age six when his mother enrolled him at the College de Navarre at Paris. He came to South Carolina with his mother and siblings in 1780 and received private tutoring until enrolling in a Charleston boarding school.

When Ralph Izard was appointed a United States Senator to represent South Carolina in 1789 he relocated his family to the provisional seat of government in New York City.⁴ While there, George Izard enrolled in King's College (currently Columbia University) as a freshman and excelled in his program of study. In 1790, he accompanied his parents to Philadelphia when Congress relocated there and he enrolled in the University of Pennsylvania to continue his education. At fifteen years of age George Izard graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in February 1792 and his father promptly began to groom him for a career in the military. Senator Izard arranged with the recently appointed minister to Great Britain, Major Thomas Pinckney, for his son to travel with him and enroll at the Prince of Wales Military Academy at Kensington Gravel Pits.⁵ Izard found the conditions deplorable and ended up on bad terms with the commandant. He left the academy after six weeks of instruction and travelled through Europe for nearly a year.

Senator Izard determined that his son should continue his military studies in Germany and obtained for him a commission with the rank of captain in the South Carolina militia. In September, 1793, Izard found himself at the Monsieur de Beauclair's Institute at Marbury in Hesse-Cassel, Germany.⁶ He completed his course of study there in the spring of 1795 and spent several weeks in Berlin observing the annual maneuvers of the Prussian army. After Senator Izard conferred with George Washington about his

son's future, the President recommended sending him to France to receive training at the school of engineers. Through the Minister of France, James Monroe, Izard enrolled at the École du Génie at Metz, France where he arrived in the fall of 1795.⁷ Senator Izard also convinced the President to arrange a commission for his son as a lieutenant in the newly-formed Corps of Engineers and Artillerists.

Izard thoroughly enjoyed his time in Metz and immersed himself in his studies as well as the polished society in the area. Unfortunately, the good times would not last as increasing tensions between the United States and France ended his program of instruction. By the end of summer in 1797, James Monroe was recalled to Washington D.C. and his replacement, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, instructed Izard to leave Metz for The Hague. Pinckney had just returned to The Hague from Paris where John Marshall and Elbridge Gerry had joined him to begin negotiations with the Directory. Once they departed for Paris, Izard sailed for Baltimore in October 1797. He then proceeded to Philadelphia to introduce himself to Secretary of War James McHenry to receive orders for his first assignment. The education and training Izard received in the United States and abroad cultivated the intellectual abilities and subject matter expertise he would require throughout his military career (see figure 2).



Figure 2. General George Izard

Source: Charles Bird King, 1813, oil on board (28 3/4 x 23 1/2 in.), Arkansas Arts Center Foundation Collection: Gift of Fred W. Allsopp. 1938.029.

A leader's intellect draws on the mental resources that shape conceptual abilities they can apply to their duties and responsibilities.⁸ These abilities allow a leader to apply sound judgment and effective critical thinking skills before implementing concepts and plans. Thinking creatively and analytically about problems enables leaders to anticipate the second- and third-order effects of their decisions as well as intended and unintended consequences. According to the Army Leadership Model, the conceptual components of an Army leader's intellect include: mental agility, sound judgment, innovation, interpersonal tact, and expertise. Izard's formal education and military training provided him the expertise required of an engineer officer. He would demonstrate each of the *intellect* components during his first assignments as a direct leader in the Corps of

Engineers and Artillerists and later as an organizational leader during the War of 1812 while in command of larger organizations.

Pre-war Military Assignments (1797-1803)

For his first duty assignment, Lieutenant Izard served as an engineer responsible for the construction of Fort [Castle] Pinckney in Charleston Harbor.⁹ Soon after he arrived, the government authorized the formation of the 2nd Regiment of Artillerists and Engineers and sent a company to garrison Fort Pinckney during the winter of 1798. Lieutenant Izard was placed in command of the newly-arrived soldiers and saw to their day-to-day activities. Sadly, an outbreak of Yellow Fever occurred the following summer that killed half of his assigned forces and Lieutenant Izard himself narrowly escaped its fatal effects.¹⁰ This assignment allowed him to apply the engineering concepts he learned throughout his overseas professional military education to fortification design and construction. Izard's exemplary duty performance resulted in the President approving his promotion to captain on July 12, 1799. Captain Izard's involvement with the project provided him with practical experience in his craft and would inform future decisions about laying siege to well-defended fortifications. It was also during this time that he demonstrated questionable judgment in his personal affairs that would nearly cost him his life a few years later.

While living in Charleston, Izard became acquainted with a family of émigrés from Saint-Domingue and began a relationship with one of the Pierre family's unmarried daughters. Although Izard claims that she knew that his situation and other circumstances would prevent any type of matrimonial connection, they continued to see each other socially. Unfortunately, "an act of unpardonable imprudence" exposed their romantic

relationship to the public.¹¹ Feeling that the family's honor was at stake, one of the young lady's older brothers challenged Izard to a duel. He accepted the challenge but when the two met outside of town to settle the matter the civil authorities intervened. They were given liberty once both men gave their words of honor not to pursue the matter further. Tensions between Lieutenant Izard and the Pierre family continued until Miss Pierre convinced him to announce their engagement with an understanding that they would never actually marry. The young couple kept up appearances until Izard received a new assignment that would take him far from South Carolina.

When President Adams expanded the size of the army as the United States and France quarreled during the Quasi-War, Senator Izard endeavored to secure an assignment for his son as the aide-de-camp for Lieutenant General Washington when he took command. Lieutenant General Washington had praise for the senator's son but declined because he had no need for aides until he were to take the field. Lieutenant Izard continued to serve at Castle Pinckney until he received a promotion to captain and an offer for a new assignment. Disgusted with South Carolina's climate and anxious to leave his personal problems behind him, Captain Izard eagerly accepted a new position as an aide to Major General Alexander Hamilton and set sail for New York City in January 1800.¹²

Shortly after Izard arrived in New York City, Hamilton left for Albany on business but not before giving him the option to stay in place or travel to Philadelphia to serve on a board of artillery headed by Major Lewis Tousard. His professional military education in France and experience as an officer in the Regiment of Artillery and Engineers made him an obvious choice to assist Tousard with the drafting of a manual for

the artillery.¹³ He assisted with completion of the *Code of Exercises, Manœuvres, and Regulations, for the Order, Discipline, and Instruction, of the Corps of Artillerists and Engineers of the United States* project by planning methods of exercise for artillery of all descriptions. Izard continued to demonstrate his expertise in the profession and ability to apply his training to examine issues at the organizational level.

Not long after completing his task in Philadelphia, Izard received a letter from William Loughton Smith, then Minister Plenipotentiary to Lisbon, Portugal, offering him a position to serve as his secretary.¹⁴ As President Adams opened negotiations to end the Quasi-War with France, Captain Izard contemplated whether to accept the new position in light of the expected drawdown of forces. Lamenting the bleak prospects of serving in combat, he wrote to General Hamilton to discuss whether he should continue with the military or pursue a career in diplomacy.¹⁵ Hamilton agreed with his concerns about a military career and informed him that his own position in the army would probably not continue for very long.¹⁶ Based on the guidance he received from Hamilton, Izard decided to accept the minister's invitation and obtained a leave of absence from Secretary of War McHenry.¹⁷ After taking his leave of Major General Hamilton, settling his accounts, and attending to business for William Smith, Captain Izard sailed for Europe.

Izard realized that he and the minister had conflicting views shortly after arriving in Lisbon.¹⁸ He demonstrated mental agility and interpersonal tact by recognizing the reactions and motives of himself and others and how they affect interactions. Through self-control, balance, and stability, Izard maintained a good working relationship with the minister despite their opposing views.¹⁹ Upon learning that their voyage to Constantinople was cancelled, one of the major inducements for Izard agreeing to leave

the United States, he decided to resign his position and travel through England and France beginning in January 1801.²⁰ Unfortunately, he exhausted his funds quickly and used the remaining money to book passage back to the United States in July 1801. Captain Izard reported to the new Secretary of War, Henry Dearborn, and obtained an assignment commanding a company in garrison at Fort Mifflin near Philadelphia.

Once in command, Izard received orders to raise recruits for his company in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.²¹ Shortly after settling into his new position, President Thomas Jefferson and the Republicans in Congress enacted their first reduction of the army through the Military Peace Establishment Act of 1802. Soon after the reduction in forces, Captain Izard replaced the recently disbanded commander of Fort Mifflin and was responsible for arranging troops at the post. Another consequence of the legislation was the disbanding of the Regiment of Artillerists and Engineers and its replacement by a separate service for each discipline.²² Izard believed his professional education and training should have led to an appointment in the newly-formed Corps of Engineers, but he was appointed in the artillery branch instead. Although annoyed by the perceived slight against him as a Federalist-leaning member of the military, Captain Izard continued to serve with distinction until his past caught up with him.

While living in Bristol, Pennsylvania, Izard was contacted by one of the brothers of his declared fiancé. Mr. Pierre travelled to Philadelphia in June 1802 to confront Captain Izard and both agreed to meet in New Jersey to engage in a duel. Since Izard had no quarrel with his fiancé's brother and understood his reasons for seeking the encounter, he used a small powder charge so that his shots would only produce a contusion.²³ Mr. Pierre's first shot missed its mark and Captain Izard's return fire recoiled off of his leg.

The brother's second shot however, found its target and severely wounded Izard with the projectile passing through his arm and into his chest. After teetering on the brink of death for days, he fully recovered and resumed his military duties. With their family honor restored, Izard's fiancé could formally release him from his marriage proposal with no further repercussions.

Section VII, Article 2 of the Articles of War, the precursor to the Uniform Code of Military Justice, banned the practice of dueling in the Revolutionary War army and states, "no officer or soldier shall presume to send a challenge to any other officer or soldier, to fight a duel, upon pain, if a commissioned officer, of being cashiered, if a non-commissioned officer or soldier, of suffering corporal punishment, at the discretion of a court-martial."²⁴ Although it is admirable that Captain Izard did not want to severely injure his fiancé's brother, engaging in a duel violated civil and military law. He displayed poor judgment by engaging in an ill-advised relationship in South Carolina and demonstrated even poorer decision-making by agreeing to a duel while stationed near Philadelphia. Izard nearly paid for these indiscretions of youth with his life, but he did learn from his mistakes by trying to deter the practice of dueling in his organizations and vigorously prosecuting those who engaged in its practice.

The War Department ordered Izard to West Point, New York to command an artillery company shortly after recovering from his wounds. Despite his feelings about the current drawdown of forces and partisan reorganization of the service, remarking that "the army had sunk to a very contemptible condition at that period of our history," he competently performed his duties and made a favorable impression on his peers.²⁵ One such soldier, the acting lieutenant and future general, Joseph Gardner Swift, remarked

that Izard “esteemed to be an accomplished officer. He had a fine collection of books and charts, and very kindly permitted me to look into them.”²⁶ Izard demonstrated the “*develops*” leader competency by setting the conditions for a positive climate in his unit. By him making it a priority to improve his subordinates and encouraging individuals to develop themselves, Izard created a learning organization environment that could support organizational change and a willing attitude to learn.²⁷

Adding to Captain Izard’s disillusionment with the military was his interactions with the United States Military Academy superintendent and head of the Corps of Engineers, Major Jonathan Williams. Still upset with the Army’s decision to commission him as an artillery officer, Izard felt their choice of who should lead the Corps of Engineers “had been bred to anything but the military profession.”²⁸ The two men often came into conflict with one another when it came to Major William’s command authority over artillery soldiers. On one occasion, Captain Izard refused to obey an order from Major Williams requisitioning a detachment of gunners to serve as servants during formal functions.²⁹ In his correspondence, Izard highlighted regulations that prevented Corps of Engineers officers from commanding line troops. He then went on to say, “I therefore have no hesitation in delaying [sic] that it [is] injurious to the artillery to employ soldiers belonging to it in any fatigue or duty which does not relate to their immediate service or their own police.”³⁰ Captain Izard aggressively protected the interests of his command and soldiers against what he believed were unreasonable requests. Through his display of moral courage he demonstrated the Army Value of *personal courage*.³¹ Izard potentially risked his career by standing up for what he believed, regardless of the consequences.

During his time at West Point, he often traveled southward to court Elizabeth Carter Shippen of Virginia, a young widow he became acquainted with while serving at Fort Mifflin. As their relationship continued over the fall of 1802 and spring of 1803, Captain Izard announced his intention to resign his commission and asked for her hand in marriage. The lack of opportunities to serve in combat, enduring the austerity of a smaller army, and perceived unprofessional conduct of superior officers had finally taken their toll on the young captain.

In 1803, having been five years a subaltern and four a captain in the artillery of the U. States, there having no appearance of war and no prospect of promotion, I resigned my commission, with the declaration however that I should hold myself ready to resume the exercise of a profession in which I was regularly educated whenever my services might be required.³²

The War Department accepted his resignation on the condition that he accompany his detachment to Richmond, Virginia in May 1803 and direct its route to their final destination in Tennessee. While marching his company of artillery to Norfolk, Virginia, Captain Izard refused another request for troops from Major Williams.³³ Unwilling to accept the Corps of Engineers lack of command authority over troops, Major Williams sent a letter of grievance to the War Department. When Secretary of War Dearborn rejected his claims in 1803 Major Williams resigned his commission in protest.³⁴

With more time to indulge in intellectual pursuits after leaving the military, Izard applied for membership to a number of professional societies. Despite the acrimony between Captain Izard and Major Williams, their shared passion for science eventually smoothed over any hurt feelings. In fact, Izard applied for and was granted membership in the United States Military Philosophical Society, which Williams founded, in 1806.³⁵ Izard sent a letter to Major Williams upon his acceptance to personally thank him and

express a desire that his efforts would contribute to the objectives of the organization. His endeavors also resulted in election to the prestigious American Philosophical Society in 1807 where he remained a contributing member throughout his life. Izard's focus on self-improvement and developing others demonstrated a commitment to being a steward of the army profession. Stewardship involves the purposeful management of resources, expertise, customs, and traditions that define the profession.³⁶ Izard would continue to demonstrate these qualities when he reentered the Army in 1812 and the remainder of his military career.

Colonel Izard and the Second Regiment of Artillery

As the United States prepared for war, the James Madison administration attempted to formulate a strategy to defeat the enemy. Since the U.S. Army lacked the means to engage British forces overseas, the only feasible strategy that would allow the Americans to take the offensive was to invade and conquer Canada (see figure 3). Seizing Montreal through Lake Champlain and the Richelieu River provided the shortest avenue of approach into this vital part of the country.³⁷ President Madison favored this approach because a successful offensive to seize Montreal would sever British lines of communication to Upper Canada via the St. Lawrence River and prevent them from mounting an effective defense of territory further west.³⁸ Unfortunately, concentrating the required U.S. Army's forces scattered throughout the vast country would take time and leave areas along the frontier open to attack by the British and their Native American allies.³⁹ An immediate attack into Canada with the militia forces available in the Northeast would require the full support of New England, the greatest source of Federalist opposition to the war.



Figure 3. The Northern Seat of War (War of 1812)

Source: Created by author.

With these limitations in mind, Major General Henry Dearborn proposed the United States invade Canada through a three-pronged attack along the Detroit frontier, British positions on the Niagara River, and Montreal.⁴⁰ U.S. forces at Detroit would invade Upper Canada to disrupt British influence with Native American tribes and cut their access to the upper Great Lakes.⁴¹ The objectives of invading Upper Canada in the Niagara River area were to deny British access to Lakes Erie and Ontario and prevent Native American attacks in that sector. Lastly, the objectives of the invasion of Lower Canada were to interdict the St. Lawrence River to cut off British supplies flowing to Upper Canada and the capture of Montreal. Dearborn believed that a simultaneous attack in three locations would stretch British resources in Canada and prevent an effective

defense along any one approach. The plan required synchronization of military forces and logistical support for three simultaneous operations in remote frontier locations. Dearborn failed to provide the necessary coordination and the War Department lacked the manpower and expertise to accomplish the task.⁴²

Unprepared for the tremendous task before it, understaffing and poor organization made conditions in the War Department particularly bad. President Madison attempted to alleviate the heavy burden on the department by asking Congress to authorize two assistant secretaries of war but Congress balked at the idea because they apparently believed that instead, creation of two new supply departments would lighten the workload.⁴³ Another serious issue plaguing the War Department was the Secretary of War himself. Considered an able politician, William Eustis seemed to lack the administrative skills required of the position and failed to give proper direction to commanders in the field. These commanders did little to inspire the confidence of their troops. Among the senior officers in the army at the start of the war (two major and six brigadier generals), most were holdovers from the Revolutionary War or political appointees with negligible military experience. Winfield Scott would later remark that, “the old officers had, very generally, sunk into either sloth, ignorance, or habits of intemperate drinking.”⁴⁴ Promising junior officers joined the ranks when Congress increased the size of the army but they held positions of limited authority and would not attain higher rank until later in the war.

Following the 1807 *Chesapeake* affair, Izard had offered his services to the government in case the United States went to war with Great Britain.⁴⁵ Secretary of War Dearborn informed him that the government would give him command of a regiment in

the event of an outbreak of hostilities. When President Jefferson's diplomatic exchange with Great Britain calmed the war fever gripping the nation, the crisis was averted and the commission offered to Izard rescinded. His next opportunity would come when Congress expanded the army in the early months of 1812. In the partisan environment of military appointments during the early American republic, Izard's Federalist sympathies did not go unnoticed.⁴⁶ Richard Rush, a Pennsylvania attorney general and prominent Republican, was well-acquainted with Izard and supported his nomination in a lengthy letter to Secretary of War William Eustis. He described the praise he had for Izard in a letter to his friend Charles Ingersoll. "The records of the War Office are found to contain some very high specimens of his talents and, indeed, the sentiment is growing around here with everyone that he is perhaps a man of the finest military pretensions in the country. The officers of the army, most of whom know him, agree to this and say unequivocally he is number one."⁴⁷ Secretary of War Eustis brought Izard's name before the Congress and he was nominated colonel of the newly formed Second Regiment of Artillery, which he accepted on March 19, 1812.⁴⁸ Colonel Izard would face many challenges in this position as years of neglect had degraded the Army's administrative and technical proficiency.

Almost as soon as Izard assumed his post a number of difficulties became manifest. After inspecting the depots of recruits in Trenton, New Jersey, he commented to the inspector general that, "the quarters are by no means as extensive or [illegible] as I had been led to expect. The buildings are considerably out of repair, and without risking the health of the men, more than four & five hundred cannot be accommodated in them."⁴⁹ He attempted to rectify the situation by requisitioning tents and stands of arms

and ordering more experienced officers to take charge of the recruits in quarters. Another issue Colonel Izard faced was the financial support of soldier wives and families while they were in the field. “Many individuals, who are well qualified to bear arms are deterred from inlisting by the apprehension of leaving their wives and children unprovided for.”⁵⁰ Izard made a recommendation that the War Department appropriate a portion of the soldier’s pay, with their consent, for the support of their families. Monitoring the morale, physical condition, and safety of his subordinates demonstrated his ability to balance mission accomplishment with the welfare of his followers.

The influx of inexperienced soldiers into the expanding army presented an obstacle to training new recruits. Colonel Izard remarked that, “the instruction for the men progresses very slowly from the want of competent company officers & non-commissioned officers.”⁵¹ An inefficient military supply system resulted in recruits often going months without uniforms and equipment, delaying the formation of new companies. As to the quality of the troops themselves, Izard felt “they are exceedingly sickly and that a considerable portion of their number will scarcely be fit for service.”⁵² Despite all of these challenges, Izard proved himself an effective organizational leader by successfully training and equipping several companies for combat operations along the Niagara frontier. He and his second in command, Lieutenant Colonel Winfield Scott, quickly gained reputations as the most effective drill masters of the war.⁵³

At the outbreak of hostilities, the War Department’s recruiting effort was directed by general officers through recruiting departments. These departments were further subdivided into districts and commanded by field grade officers.⁵⁴ The Secretary of War assigned the army’s recruiting effort to the inspector general, Colonel Alexander Smyth,

who put the onus on district commanders. Colonel Izard assumed command of the 4th Recruiting District and began recruiting, instructing, and outfitting soldiers from parts of Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. The War Department would assign officers and companies to regiments, but in August 1812 the regimental commander could now control how his officers were assigned in the organization. This shift in policy gave Colonel Izard the ability to place the most talented people in the Second Regiment of Artillery in positions of increased responsibility. Many of the officers who he assigned to command battalion and company-sized elements in the organization would go on to distinguish themselves during the war and attain higher rank in the post-war army.

According to the Leadership Development Model, an essential component of the “gets results” leadership competency is to attract, recognize, and retain talent.⁵⁵ Upon his joining the Second Regiment of Artillery, Colonel Izard recognized the abilities of Lieutenant Colonel Winfield Scott when he reported in July 1812. In a letter to Brigadier General Smyth regarding his task to organize a battalion of artillery officers and recruits, Colonel Izard remarked, “Lieut. Col: Winfield Scott is here, I expect much assistance from him in the proposed organization.”⁵⁶ When given the authority to task organize the Second Regiment of Artillery and asked to provide a battalion of artillery for a force being concentrated near Albany, New York, Colonel Izard appointed Scott its commander.⁵⁷ He would go on to distinguish himself along the Niagara frontier at the Battle of Queenston Heights on October 13, 1812 and later battles of the War of 1812. After the war, Winfield Scott would continue to serve in the U.S. Army through the Civil War, attaining the rank of Brevet Lieutenant General.

Colonel Izard also recognized talented junior officers in his organization, such as Nathan Towson, Thomas Biddle, and Jacob Hindman. He placed them in positions of responsibility and all three officers distinguished themselves in combat. Colonel Izard appointed Captain Towson as a company commander and sent his unit to Albany attached to Lieutenant Colonel Scott's battalion. He led a detachment of 50 men to capture the British ships *Detroit* and *Caledonia* anchored beneath the artillery guns at Fort Erie on October 10, 1812 and participated in heavy fighting at the Battle of Queenston Heights.⁵⁸ Nathan Towson continued his career in the U.S. Army after the War of 1812, attaining the rank of major general in 1848 for his service during the Mexican-American War.

Within four months of his taking command of the Second Regiment of Artillery, Colonel Izard realized many of the challenges he faced stemmed from disorganization in the artillery brought about by a lack of senior leadership coordinating the service.⁵⁹ Thinking as an organizational leader beyond his own regiment, he wanted to implement structural changes at the highest level. In correspondence with the War Department, Izard noted that each artillery unit (First Regiment of Artillery, the Light Artillery, and additional regiments) were composed of different troop levels, command structure, and systems of supply.⁶⁰ He stressed the importance of uniformity within the artillery branch in a letter to Secretary of War Eustis.

In all military institutions uniformity is of the utmost importance; uniformity of composition, of formation, of maneuvers, in order that troops of the same arm joining from distant stations and without previous acquaintance with each other or their commanders, may at the moment of assembling be enabled to cooperate in any measure of attack or defense which it may be necessary to execute.⁶¹

Colonel Izard proposed to overhaul the entire organization and combine the various forces into a single Corps of Artillery. He proposed that the new Corps of Artillery would consist of eight battalions, headed by a colonel-in-chief. Eight companies would form a battalion with each company composed of four officers and 88 non-commissioned officers and soldiers. The War Department acknowledged receipt of the proposal and reserved it for consideration by the legislature.⁶² With organizational problems of their own, no immediate action was taken on Colonel Izard's proposal and the artillery made due with the existing system. However, in 1814 the War Department consolidated the three regiments of heavy artillery into the Corps of Artillery.

From his first assignment as a company commander at Fort Pinckney through regimental command, Colonel Izard demonstrated the attributes and competencies of an army leader. He served as a role model to peers and subordinates through a dedicated lifelong effort to learn his profession and to develop himself and others.⁶³ Izard carefully managed army resources, ensured the welfare of soldiers and their families, identified promising officers and placed them in command positions, and focused on organizational change at the strategic level. Failure of the aging general officers prosecuting the war effort led to their removal, creating opportunities for promising young officers to advance. As combat operations unfolded along the Canadian border, Colonel Izard continued attending to the many administrative and training issues confronting the Second Regiment of Artillery for the remainder of 1812. His excellent performance did not go unnoticed by the War Department and resulted in his selection for positions of increased responsibility in the coming year.

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CHAPTER 3

COASTAL DEFENSE AND BATTLE OF CHATEAUGUAY

The series of misfortunes experienced this year in our military land operations exceeds all anticipations made even by those who had least confidence in our inexperienced officers and undisciplined men.

— Albert Gallatin, Letter to Thomas Jefferson (December 18, 1812)

The American campaign to invade Canada in 1812 had resulted in failure on all three fronts. According to a prominent Federalist newspaper in Vermont, the Republican rush to war caused nothing but disaster, defeat, disgrace, and death.¹ Poor leadership and administrative inefficiency demonstrated that the Madison administration's strategy pushed the focus of operations too far west and revealed the incompetence of the army's senior leadership. The removal of these ineffective commanders created room at the top for the advancement of their more effective subordinates. First, this chapter will describe the 1812 campaigns to introduce the military leaders whose failures would set the stage for Major General Izard's selection for positions of greater responsibility. Second, it will explore Izard's leadership qualities upon his promotion to brigadier general and appointment to oversee the defensive preparations at New York City. Finally, the chapter assesses these factors upon his transfer to Major General Wade Hampton's division for the invasion of Canada and resulting Battle of Chateauguay.

Strategic Setting: 1812 Failures and Plans for 1813

Problems with financing the war extended to every detail of recruitment, equipping, and fielding the Army, and contributed to the military disasters of 1812. Secretary of the Treasury Albert Gallatin preoccupied himself with war finance because

he believed it would have a disruptive effect on the nation's effort to repay the debt incurred during the American Revolution by 1817. Calculations that Gallatin made using trade revenues collected during the profitable years of neutral trade before 1807 suggested he could service an enlarged wartime debt through loans from the first Bank of the United States without imposing taxes on the populace.² However, by 1811 trade revenues decreased with the self-imposed commercial restrictions enacted after 1807 and the Republicans allowed the charter of the Bank of the United States to expire. Furthermore, expansion of the war in Europe prevented the government from seeking loans in the international market. The only remaining options open to the United States were to increase taxes and attempt to borrow from the national capital market. Fiscal uncertainties and delays in Congress passing legislation to expand the size of the Army had a profound impact on timely recruitment, as Colonel Izard came to experience throughout 1812.

Recruitment shortfalls prolonged the time it took to organize and train regiments, which were set by law in June 1812 to 1,000 officers and men.³ War Department intervention ensured that establishment of these new regiments would do little to improve the Army's prospects for conducting a successful campaign. They made a habit of manning companies at one-third to two-thirds of their total strength and assigning them to regiments of their own choosing. Regimental colonels were shocked to discover the manning levels of these companies and often tried to hold them back until they received additional troops, uniforms, equipment, and training. To placate the Madison administration's desire for action, the War Department began detaching these reduced companies from their regiments and sending them to the northern frontier to comprise an

invading army. Creation of these piecemeal organizations and supplementing them with militia and volunteer forces, not without their own problems, set the stage for the military failures yet to come.

The Northwest Campaign, April–August 1812

Although the overall strategy for invading Canada called for a simultaneous and coordinated attack, the Northwest Campaign moved first and unsupported.⁴ The Michigan Territory held strategic importance to the United States because it bordered the Northwest Indian nations and western portion of Upper Canada. President Madison appointed the Michigan Territory governor and Revolutionary War veteran, William Hull, to lead the campaign. At first, Hull cautioned Secretary of War William Eustis and the President against invading Canada through the northwest and insisted control of the Great Lakes would improve the prospects of success. Undeterred, Eustis and Madison proceeded with the operation without naval support. Hull assembled an army of 2,000 regular and militia soldiers at Dayton, Ohio during April and May 1812 and received orders to march for Detroit before Congress declared war.⁵

British forces stationed at Fort Amherstburg learned of the American declaration of war before Hull did and seized a transport carrying his baggage, papers, and supplies traveling to Detroit. Unfortunately, someone placed the army's muster rolls and Hull's correspondence with the Secretary of War among his belongings, providing the British with detailed war plans and the size and disposition of his forces. Major General Isaac Brock, lieutenant governor and military commander of Upper Canada remarked, "Till I received these letters, I had no idea General Hull was advancing with so large a force."⁶ Hull arrived in Detroit on July 5 and crossed into British territory to prepare for an attack

on Fort Amherstburg. Constantly concerned about his precarious logistical situation and Native American attacks along his supply lines to Ohio, Hull abandoned these plans after the fall of Mackinac Island and withdrew back to Detroit.

Unaware that General Henry Dearborn had agreed to a truce with the British that did not include Detroit, Hull desperately waited for the offensive along the Niagara frontier to reduce the pressure on his forces. General Brock used the reprieve provided by the truce and Hull's hesitance to gather enough reinforcements to oppose the Americans. Taking advantage of intelligence suggesting Hull's troops had lost confidence in him; Brock moved his forces towards Detroit and demanded that he surrender the fort.⁷ After Hull refused his demands, General Brock's forces surrounded the fort and his artillery opened fire from the Canadian shore of the Detroit River. Fear of a Native Americans massacre of the women and children taking refuge within, which Brock implied their allies would do if he did not accept terms of surrender, may have caused Hull to start acting erratically. With no more will left to resist, he surrendered all American forces in the fort and surrounding wilderness, making this decision without consulting any of his officers.⁸ The British victory in the Northwest shocked the nation and quickly dispelled the notion of a quick war.

The Niagara Campaign, June–December 1812

Lieutenant General Sir George Prevost became the captain general and governor in chief of British North America in 1811. Before the outbreak of war, he worked to expand the Canadian militia, manage his limited resources, and protect the waterways that formed his lines of communications. Prevost viewed the truce negotiated with General Dearborn as an opportunity to augment his resources against an American

invasion; a sentiment that President Madison also shared.⁹ On August 26, 1812, Dearborn received a directive from the President ordering him to cancel the truce and conduct operations along the 36-mile border formed by the Niagara River. Capturing the town of Queenston would give the United States control over the transit point between Lake Ontario and Lake Erie and sever British lines of communication with Upper Canada.¹⁰ It would also give the Americans a foothold on the Niagara peninsula and permit a troop buildup in preparation for an attack against Fort George.

The War Department allowed the governor of New York, Daniel D. Tompkins, to make the choice of who would lead the Army of the Center. He chose Major General Stephen Van Rensselaer, a local militia officer with little military experience. Brigadier General Alexander Smyth, a regular army officer, commanded 1,600 regular troops assigned to Van Rensselaer's Army of the Center. Known for his publication of a manual on field maneuvers, Smyth also had no practical experience. Despite explicit orders from the War Department to do so, Smyth was unwilling to place himself or his troops under a militia officer's control.¹¹ When General Smyth arrived in Buffalo, he ignored a request to meet with General Van Rensselaer in Lewiston and insisted that combat operations originate from his location.¹² This strained relationship caused problems throughout the chain of command as they prepared to invade Canada and became an enduring theme throughout the war.

Van Rensselaer had assembled over 6,200 troops and faced a combined British and Native American force of 2,300 across the Niagara River.¹³ His plan was to attack Queenston from Lewiston while Smyth attacked Fort George six miles to the north. With Smyth ignoring his attempts to coordinate their efforts and fear of public criticism for not

pressing the offensive, Van Rensselaer decided to use the 3,000 men assembled near Lewiston to launch an amphibious landing at Queenston on October 11.¹⁴ After weather and loss of boats carrying oars postponed the operation, the Americans made another attempt days later. An advance guard of 300 men, mostly regulars, crossed the river and drove the British from Queenston Heights.¹⁵ General Brock, who had returned from his recent victory at Detroit, was killed trying to retake dominant high ground. At this point over 600 troops occupied the heights under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Winfield Scott. Pinned down by a band of Grand River Iroquois and later engaged by a large British force, Scott desperately needed reinforcements. When militia forces on the American side of the river refused to cross into Canada, Scott's troops could no longer hold their position and either fled or surrendered.

Following the failure at Queenston, Smyth accused Van Rensselaer of deliberately keeping his forces out of action.¹⁶ Van Rensselaer, feeling disgusted and betrayed, countered that Smyth refused to cooperate with him and asked to be relieved of command. The War Department transferred command to General Smyth on October 16, 1812 and he began organizing his forces in preparation for an attack on Fort Erie. After a series of preliminary assaults across the Niagara River in November, Smyth cancelled the primary attack when his officers discovered that many of the Pennsylvania militiamen refused to cross into Canada.¹⁷ Assailed by the New York militia, Smyth requested to take leave and never returned. Abandonment of the attack on Fort Erie signaled the end of the campaign by December 1812 and both sides went into winter quarters.

The Campaign in the East, July 1812–February 1813

Considered the most strategically important theater of American operations because control of the area would sever British supply lines to Upper Canada, the northern theater of operations encompassed Montreal in the north, Kingston and Upper Canada in the west, and Plattsburg, New York in the south (see figure 4).¹⁸ Control of the waterways was essential to conducting operations in this region. Kingston served as the main British naval base while Sackett's Harbor was the main American naval base. Dense wilderness limited activities to the corridors formed by the eastern portion of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River, and through Lake Champlain and Plattsburg. Both American and British forces used these corridors as avenues of approach during the war.



Figure 4. Campaign in the East, 1812–1813

Source: Created by author.

On July 19, 1812, Brigadier General Jacob Brown defeated a British raid on Sackett's Harbor in the first significant engagement in the region. Supply and ammunition shortages compelled Brown to order Captain Benjamin Forsyth and the U.S. Regiment of Riflemen to raid a British supply depot at Gananoque later in September. The Americans seized weapons and ammunition casks and Forsyth's group of regulars quickly gained a reputation for consistently defeating enemy forces at the beginning of the conflict.¹⁹ Brown moved his base of operations from Sackett's Harbor to Ogdensburg, New York shortly after the Gananoque raid and garrisoned the town to threaten the main British supply line to the Great Lakes. American forces captured the town Akwesasne southwest of Montreal on the St. Lawrence River in October, but the British recaptured it and continued on to raid French Mills nine miles to the east.

On February 6, 1813, the newly promoted Major Forsyth led a contingent of 200 riflemen across the frozen St. Lawrence River to liberate prisoners from Elizabethtown. The British retaliated for this raid a few weeks later by deploying 800 men in two columns to simultaneously attack Ogdensburg from the west, near Fort La Presentation, and the east.²⁰ Despite facing stiff opposition at Fort La Presentation, the British drove Forsyth from the field and occupied the town. After Colonel Alexander Macomb refused to send him reinforcements to counterattack the British and regain Ogdensburg, Forsyth returned to Sackett's Harbor. The Americans would not threaten British supply lines in this sector for the rest of the war.

While General Brown engaged the British along the St. Lawrence frontier, General Dearborn planned to attack Montreal via Plattsburg. He commanded all American forces in the northern theater and was directed to coordinate his attack with

Van Rensselaer to alleviate pressure on Hull in the west. Dearborn spent most of the summer of 1812 in New England where he was supposed to use his influence as a prominent Massachusetts Republican to recruit soldiers for the war effort.²¹ However, enlistments were slow and most of the available troops in the area were siphoned off to other fronts. As a result, he delayed the offensive to focus on building his forces and preparing coastal defenses in New England. Dearborn's dilatoriness led an exasperated Secretary of War Eustis to inform him that, "the troops shall come to you as fast as the season will admit, and the blow must be struck. Congress must not meet without a victory to announce to them."²²

Desperate for a victory and convinced Dearborn's delays contributed to Hull's defeat in Detroit, the administration ordered him to commence his attack on Montreal. He finally marched his army of 3,500 regulars and 2,500 militia from Plattsburg to Champlain, New York in November.²³ After the inconclusive skirmish at Lacolle River led by Colonel Zebulon Pike and learning that half of his militia troops refused to cross the border, Dearborn called a council of war with his subordinate officers. They recommended calling off the campaign and marching back to Plattsburg for winter quarters.²⁴ Thus, on November 22, 1812 his army marched south, ending the 1812 campaign season in what Charles J. Ingersoll recalled, was a "miscarriage without even the heroism of disaster."²⁵

The United States entered the war in June 1812 convinced that an invasion of Canada would only be a matter of marching north. However, an unprepared and unproven army, incompetent leaders, and stiff Anglo-Canadian resistance resulted in a series of disappointing outcomes. By December 1812, America's grand strategy had

ended in defeat on all three fronts and President Madison scrambled to develop a new war plan and promote proven leaders to guide it to success. Despite the failure of American arms in the first year of the war, a few junior officers, such as Brown, Scott, and Izard, demonstrated competent leadership and effectiveness even when their superiors did not.

1813: A New Strategic Direction

The Madison administration realized that significant changes to the military were necessary to achieve success during the upcoming campaign season. In January 1813, Congress voted to expand the size of the Army by adding 19 infantry regiments and one regiment of rangers.²⁶ Unfortunately, recruitment efforts failed to keep up with the demand for soldiers and newly formed companies often marched for the frontier below their authorized end strength. In an overhaul of the Army's leadership, President Madison appointed four new major generals (William Henry Harrison, Morgan Lewis, Wade Hampton, and James Wilkinson) and seven new brigadier generals. Responsibility for the failures of 1812 fell squarely upon William Eustis and forced his resignation on December 3, 1812. James Monroe served briefly as the interim Secretary of War until February 1813, when the president appointed the commander of New York City's defenses, Brigadier General John Armstrong, to the position. A self-proclaimed strategist and able administrator, Armstrong's actions during his tenure at the War Department would later disprove these assertions.

American strategy in 1813 designated control of Lake Ontario as the key to operational success in Lower Canada. Armstrong's plan called for regaining control of the Northwest Territory, seizing the Niagara peninsula, and destroying British naval

bases at Kingston and York.²⁷ In preparation for these attacks, he directed General Dearborn to send 4,000 troops to Sackett's Harbor and 3,000 troops to Buffalo.²⁸ Dearborn was to coordinate his first attack against the British naval base at Kingston with Commodore Isaac Chauncey, commander of naval forces operating in the Great Lakes and Lake Champlain. An attack on the naval base at York and capture of forts along the Niagara would follow the destruction of the British fleet at Kingston. Overestimating British strength at Kingston, Dearborn and Chauncey convinced Armstrong to first attack York, followed by an attack on Fort George to cut British lines of communication to the Upper Great Lakes. A simultaneous attack on Fort Erie by American forces stationed at Buffalo would enable General Harrison's forces to regain control of Detroit and threaten Upper Canada. The Madison administration hoped the badly needed adjustments made to the Army would result in operational success after the spring thaw.

The Coastal Defense of New York City

New York City's economic importance to the United States increased dramatically in the eighteenth century. Local citizens that could remember experiencing seven years of British occupation of the city during the Revolutionary War feared it would become a target again. As one of the most important ports in the United States, the fortification of New York City's harbor was a top priority. At the request of General Armstrong, the commanding general of New York City defenses, the Adjutant General directed Colonel Izard to proceed there to assist Colonel Henry Burbeck with defensive preparations of the harbor in October 1812. Izard's headquarters was located in nearby Philadelphia so he had already given much thought to the protection of this decisive point.

The harbor of New York appears to me to be one of the most vulnerable as well as important points on our coast. I consider it as a high distinction to have my services there desired by the commanding general and am ready to obey orders to join him at the shortest notice. The age and services of Colonel Burbeck justly entitle him to every attention from the government, and there never will be the least hesitation on my part in serving under the command of a veteran officer of the United States.²⁹

Professional expertise and performance as commander of the Second Regiment of Artillery made a lasting impression. Shortly after Armstrong was appointed Secretary of War, he promoted Izard to brigadier general and ordered him to relieve Burbeck as the commanding general of New York City and its dependencies.³⁰

Upon his arrival, Brigadier General Izard immediately set about improving the “puerile errors in the plan of defense comparable to those which mark every portion of the execution,” with determination and ability.³¹ He transferred and repositioned several batteries of eighteen-pounder artillery pieces around the city, directed the construction of numerous blockhouses and entrenchments, and saw to their manning and provisioning. Intelligence obtained from sources in Bermuda suggested that New York City and Norfolk, Virginia were British points of attack.³² Increased naval armament off of the coast and sightings of a British squadron anchored near Sandy Hook, New Jersey, the entrance to Lower New York Bay, seemed to confirm these reports. To guard against enemy ships entering New York harbor undetected, Izard directed the port wardens to have their pilots detain all vessels until the commanding officer of the fort or flotilla could issue a passport to proceed. When the port wardens refused to comply based on their interpretation of the order’s legality, the Madison administration determined Izard’s actions were consistent with providing for the national defense, stating that “the

circumstances of an existing law & the presence of an enemy's fleet upon the coast, the propriety of the rule which you have prescribed cannot be questioned.”³³

The next measure General Izard took to shore up the defenses at Sandy Hook included ordering a contingent of New York Volunteers to move from Bedloe and Ellis Islands to reinforce the post. Unfortunately, the troops refused to comply with the order when the transport ships arrived and their officers could only convince about 50 to embark. Despite the event causing him “considerable embarrassment,” Izard approached the situation calmly by conducting a thorough investigation.³⁴ During the course of his inquiry, he learned that the men of the companies were “duped by the officers who enlisted them.” According to the terms of their enlistment contract, they volunteered their services “under the specific condition that we are not at any time within the space of the year for while we volunteer, to be removed from the city of New York; but are only to garrison the forts and fortresses adjoining the said city.”

General Izard learned that the contract was considered illegal according to the city's judiciary authorities. As such, he did not prosecute the men who refused to comply with his orders but laid the blame squarely with the officers that created the contracts. Recruiting practices varied during the war with some officers appealing to patriotism and others resorting to less savory methods, such as setting up in taverns to ply men with liquor, to meet their quotas.³⁵ Most of the 300 men eventually compelled to go to Sandy Hook deserted and Izard could not “at present dispense with their services,” because of the remaining troops in the regiment, “the great majority of all ranks is in a deplorable state of indiscipline, approaching sometimes to mutiny.” Izard's determined leadership

and ability to manage difficult personnel problems resulted in the timely completion of a temporary fortification (Fort Gates) on Sandy Hook by May 1813.

In the short period of time Izard held the position of commanding general of New York City he overcame many obstacles to accomplish the task of fortifying its harbor defenses. He continued to develop his technical knowledge of artillery and fortress construction and Izard's reputation hastened his advancement through the ranks. Izard demonstrated his abilities as an innovative leader by using his experience, knowledge, and creative thinking to design a new type of artillery shell that he described to the Secretary of War as having "more merit than any of the projects lately communicated to me."³⁶ He displayed remarkable self-control when dealing with New York Volunteers who refused to comply with movement orders despite it causing him much embarrassment. Leaders that have control over their emotions are more effective and inspire calm confidence in their subordinates, which is especially important in combat.³⁷

A leader of character, Izard's integrity compelled him to do what was right, legally and morally, by voiding the illegal soldier enlistment contracts even though it would jeopardize his ability to accomplish the mission. He showed empathy for the soldiers by genuinely relating to their situation, motives, and feelings. Empathy allows leaders to better take care of soldiers and their families in order to build a strong and ready force.³⁸ Continuous development of these leadership traits made Izard successful as commanding general and set him up for future assignments. He continued to improve New York City's defensive posture until the fear of invasion subsided in August 1813. Once the threat passed, Izard appealed to Armstrong for a transfer to a more active theater of operations.

Lake Ontario Operations: April–July 1813

As the ice receded from Sackett's Harbor, the Americans prepared to launch their spring offensive. Beginning on April 20, 1813, over 1,800 soldiers and 800 sailors boarded 13 warships bound for the village and naval base of York.³⁹ After five days of driving rain and strong waves, Commodore Chauncey and his squadron arrived at the objective. Leading the ground attack against Major General Sir Roger Sheaffe's 1,000 British regulars, militia, and Native American warriors was Brigadier General Zebulon Pike.⁴⁰ Major Forsyth and his riflemen spearheaded the attack and with supporting fires provided by Chauncey's ships in the harbor, managed to push through the contested landing site. Ships continued to shuttle troops ashore for two hours as the Americans slowly forced the British to withdraw eastward toward the Western Battery. Sensing he could not defend York against the American attack, Sheaffe ordered his regular troops to abandon their positions and began extracting his forces from the town.⁴¹

Tragedy struck the Americans in the early afternoon when a massive explosion of the garrison's magazine at the Government House Battery ejected a column of timber, stone, and iron cannon shot into the air. One of these stone projectiles fell on and crushed General Pike, who later died aboard Chauncey's flagship. General Dearborn, watching the battle unfold from the safety of his ship, came ashore upon Pike's death to take command of the situation. By this time Chauncey and Dearborn could not maintain control of their troops, some of whom began to plunder private homes and burn public buildings.⁴² Although the operation was successful, the loss of General Pike proved particularly tragic because the Army desperately needed such capable officers. During the raid on York, the Americans suffered about 320 casualties, mostly due to the magazine

explosion, and the British 200 casualties and 275 captured.⁴³ Despite these losses, Dearborn and Chauncey began planning for the next offensive on the Niagara Peninsula.

Brigadier General John Vincent commanded a garrison of 1,000 British regulars with 350 militia and 150 Native Americans available for service at Fort George.⁴⁴ Located at the mouth of the Niagara River, the post was situated nearly 1,000 yards south of the American-held Fort Niagara on the opposite shore.⁴⁵ Bad weather, an outbreak of disease among the troops, and communication difficulties between Commodore Chauncey and General Dearborn delayed the American attack on Fort George until May 25, 1813.⁴⁶ Following the victory at York, Chauncey moved additional forces from Sackett's Harbor to the western end of Lake Ontario so that nearly 4,700 men had concentrated to the east of Fort Niagara at Four Mile Creek. In a joint operation, Chauncey opened up with an artillery barrage from the lake to cover Colonel Winfield Scott's landing force of 800 men, including Major Forsyth's rifle battalion.⁴⁷ Once ashore, the Americans assaulted an embankment beyond the landing. When Brigadier General John Boyd's 1st U.S. Brigade landed they immediately formed and joined the assault.

After two successive assaults on their position, the British defenders realized they could not withstand the American firepower or numerical superiority and were forced to withdraw. Vincent ordered the garrison to spike its guns and destroy their magazine and stores before sounding the retreat southward toward Beaver Dams. Despite an injury incurred after debris from a magazine explosion threw him from his horse, Scott formed an advance guard to maintain contact with the British and set off toward Queenston. Cautious by nature and in fear of a defeat should Vincent turn and fight, Major General

Morgan Lewis ordered Scott to call off the pursuit and return to Fort George. Vincent managed to escape with the remains of his division and took refuge at Burlington Heights. In total, the Battle of Fort George resulted in 350 British casualties compared to 140 American losses.⁴⁸ Since the capture of Fort George left British positions along the Niagara peninsula exposed, Vincent ordered the evacuation of Chippewa, Queenston, and Fort Erie.⁴⁹ For the time being the Americans controlled the entire frontier, but failure to follow up on their victory would allow the British to erase those gains over the summer.

General Sir George Prevost and Royal Navy Commodore Sir James Lucas Yeo launched an attack on Sackett's Harbor on May 29, while Chauncey moved troops towards Fort George. American regulars and a militia force led by General Brown put up fierce resistance and compelled the British to withdraw out of fear that further losses would leave Kingston defenseless.⁵⁰ In a belated attempt to pursue the British, General Dearborn dispatched 2,500 troops to engage the enemy along the shoreline of Lake Ontario. A daring British night attack successfully penetrated the American lines and captured the artillery as well as the commanding generals. In complete disarray, the remainder of the detachment withdrew to Fort George where they endured countless British and Native American raids. Contaminated provisions and an unusually wet summer caused disease to spread through the post and disgruntled junior officers resigned their commissions in protest. The surrender of 600 American troops ambushed at Beaver Dams on June 24 effectively ended the 1813 Niagara campaign and Dearborn's military career. Secretary of War Armstrong ordered him to a quiet command in New York City and directed the Army to remain on the defensive and take no further risks.

The Advance toward Montreal: September–December 1813

Armstrong promoted Revolutionary War veterans James Wilkinson and Wade Hampton to major general on the same day, with Wilkinson taking precedence. He appointed General Wilkinson commander of the 9th Military District, which encompassed New York north of the highlands, Vermont, and parts of Pennsylvania.⁵¹ General Hampton, also in the 9th Military District, commanded troops on Lake Champlain. Unfortunately, the two men were bitter enemies and their feuding threatened the success of any combined operation. Hampton knew his troops would likely contribute to any upcoming campaign and threatened to resign his commission unless he received his orders directly from the Secretary, not through Wilkinson. Armstrong would devise a similar arrangement with split commands in 1814, which threatened unity of command and resulted in a similarly poor outcome.

During the summer of 1813, Armstrong, Wilkinson, and Chauncey met at Sackett's Harbor to develop a new strategy. President Madison was deathly ill at the time so his principal military officers exercised considerable authority in directing the war. After Wilkinson explored all possible options for renewing the campaign along the Niagara River, he finally consented to Kingston as the campaign's objective in early October. Characteristic of his style of leadership as Secretary of War, Armstrong issued an ambiguous directive to guide the operation.

If the British fleet shall not escape Commodore Chauncey and get into Kingston harbor, if the garrison of that place be not largely reinforced; and if the weather be such as will allow us to navigate the lake securely, Kingston shall be our first objective, otherwise we shall go directly to Montreal.⁵²

At the time, Wilkinson suffered from a debilitating illness and was treated with a mixture of whiskey and laudanum (a tincture of opium) that clouded his judgment during the

campaign.⁵³ Meanwhile, Hampton and his 4,000 troops marched north from Plattsburg to Four Corners, New York and waited for Wilkinson to prepare for his part of the campaign.

On October 17, Wilkinson set out from Sackett's Harbor down the St. Lawrence River with a substantial fleet and 7,000 troops. Although still insisting the objective of the campaign was to attack Kingston, at some point in late October he changed it to Montreal (see figure 5).⁵⁴ Armstrong envisioned both columns uniting in Canada for a decisive drive toward the objective. Armstrong's plan suffered from many inherent weaknesses. Success depended on the close coordination between two commanders that detested one another as they approached Montreal from the south and east. Hampton and Wilkinson failed to appreciate the weather and terrain challenges they were about to undertake. Hampton would have to traverse miles of swampy woodland defended by well-trained Canadian forces and the time of year almost guaranteed that inclement weather would hamper Wilkinson's transit down the St. Lawrence River.⁵⁵ Logistics, however, represented the biggest obstacle to military operations along the Canadian frontier. Primitive or non-existent road networks and dependence on unreliable civilian contractors produced shortages of all types of provisions throughout the war.



Figure 5. The Advance on Montreal, October–November, 1813

Source: Created by author.

The Battle of Chateaugay, October 26, 1813

Acceding to General Izard's request for a transfer to a unit conducting combat operations, Secretary Armstrong ordered him to proceed from New York City to join General Hampton's division at Plattsburg. In October 1813, Izard assumed command of a brigade consisting of 1,350 men from the 10th, 29th, 30th, and 31st Infantry.⁵⁶ Hampton received orders to proceed toward Montreal and on October 21, he marched 3,800 men of his force north into Canada along the Chateaugay River.⁵⁷ Although Hampton's division was sizable for the theater of operations, it was "composed principally of recruits who had been but a short time in the service, and had not been exercised with that rigid discipline so essentially necessary to constitute the soldier."⁵⁸ Consecutive days of

arduous marching through difficult terrain resulted in considerable fatigue among the soldiers, many of whom were unaccustomed to such rigors. On October 25, Hampton's division encountered a British force of 1,600 troops commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Charles de Salaberry.⁵⁹

De Salaberry had conducted a thorough reconnaissance of the area and constructed a series of defensive lines along the road that Hampton must take to transport his guns and supplies. Although Hampton possessed numerical superiority, he determined that a direct assault against the arrayed barricades and abatis would prove too costly. Instead, he ordered Colonel Robert Purdy to lead the 1st Brigade across the right bank of the Chateauguay River and re-cross at a ford two miles below the enemy to attack their position from the rear. Once Purdy made contact, Hampton would order General Izard's brigade forward in a frontal attack to pin the defenders between two forces, compelling them to retreat or surrender (see figure 6).⁶⁰ Purdy crossed the river at dusk on the evening of October 25 and spent most of the night being misled by his guides. They were discovered by the enemy after traveling only six miles and fired on from the opposite side of the river. When General Hampton heard the sound of the guns he asked Izard if he would mind crossing the river in front to act as a diversion with the 10th Infantry alone. The remainder of his brigade trailed a mile and a half behind and would be sent forward immediately. He later described the encounter in his journal, writing "of course I go."⁶¹



Figure 6. The Battle of Chateauguy

Source: Created by author.

Izard moved forward toward the abatis and despite some difficulty due to the terrain, deployed the 10th Infantry in line. “On the brink of a deep ravine, within a hundred yards of a thick wood, we are met by a volley of musketry. Some confusion in forming the 10th in line, but at last succeed.” Maintaining a brisk rate of fire until their ammunition ran low, they obtained a resupply from a working party in the rear and advance toward the wood. Purdy heard the firing from the opposite side of the river and attempted to move his troops forward. In an intense and confused firefight with a company of Canadian militia, both sides believed they were outnumbered and withdrew. Purdy received exaggerated intelligence reports and an order from Hampton to withdrawal to the west side of the river.⁶² Meanwhile, the rest of Izard’s forces arrived to

support the 10th Infantry and he maneuvered his entire force in front of de Salaberry's defensive position.

Forming his three battalions into a line formation, Izard advanced and opened fire on a British skirmish line composed of three companies deployed in front of their position. The initial volleys from the line were thrown to the right of the Canadians, who were positioned behind rocks and trees, but Izard redirected their fire to the right and filed them up with speed to change their front parallel with the lines of breastworks.⁶³ The volume of musket fire unleashed by the Americans compelled de Salaberry to pull his skirmishers behind the abatis.⁶⁴ In his after-action report to the Secretary of War, Hampton remarked that "this brigade would have pushed forward as far as courage, skill and perseverance could have carried it; but on advancing it was found that the firing had commenced on the opposite side, and the ford had not been gained."⁶⁵

Frustrated by the lack of progress on both flanks, Hampton recalled Izard and ordered him to position his brigade as the rearguard. Izard again demonstrated his effectiveness as a field commander with the orderly withdrawal of his troops while still in contact with the enemy.

The slowness and order with which general Izard retired with his brigade, could but have inspired the enemy with respect. They presumed not to venture a shot at him during his movement; but the unguardedness of some part of Purdy's command exposed him to a rear attack from the Indians, which was repeated after dark, and exposed him to some loss. These attacks were always repelled, and must have cost the enemy as many lives as we lost.⁶⁶

The loss of 50 men at the Battle of Chateaugay brought the campaign to an end and Hampton marched his division back to Plattsburg.⁶⁷ Anticipating the fallout from his actions, Hampton resigned his commission and left for Washington D.C., just before Wilkinson could have him arrested. Wilkinson's defeat at the Battle of Crysler's Farm on

November 11, 1813 compelled him to cancel the entire operation, thus ending another disappointing campaign season.

According to the Leadership Requirements Model, leaders illustrate that they care about subordinates through their presence.⁶⁸ Leaders who routinely share in team hardships and dangers serve as an inspiration to those they lead. General Izard demonstrated his presence while sharing the danger of combat with the soldiers of his brigade at the Battle of Chateauguay. Izard demonstrated the competency “leads by example” through his display of physical courage while under fire. This allowed him to effectively deploy and maneuver inexperienced and fatigued troops in order to deliver effective volleys of musketry against entrenched enemy defenders. Izard shared the hardships of his soldiers when they went into winter quarters at Plattsburg. While most of the division’s general officers took a leave of absence from Plattsburg for warmer and more comfortable locations, Izard remained on station through January 5, 1814 when three weeks of severe illness forced him to relinquish command.⁶⁹ Setting a personal example for subordinates to emulate enables a leader to build a climate of trust within the organization and helps soldiers maintain resilience during adverse conditions.

While the Army showed signs of improvement that led to a handful of tactical successes, ineffective leaders and poor decisions prevented their translation into operational and strategic success. Since the beginning of the war, Washington recognized that capture of Montreal or Quebec would sever British lines of communication with Upper Canada and end effective resistance in the west.⁷⁰ However, the Secretary of War and military leadership insisted on major operations against objectives in the Northwest and along the shores of Lake Ontario. Failure of the campaigns on the Niagara Peninsula

and in the northern theater would result in the marginalization, retirement, or court martial of three of the four major generals promoted by President Madison in 1813. Fortunately, a handful of officers demonstrated the competence necessary to build and lead an effective force. As one of the few senior officers untainted by the debacles of the previous fall, General Izard's performance brought him into consideration for higher command in 1814.

¹ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 89.

² Stagg, *The War of 1812*, 52.

³ *Ibid.*, 56.

⁴ Rauch, *The Campaign of 1812*, 14.

⁵ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 80.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*, 82.

⁸ Stagg, *The War of 1812*, 65.

⁹ Mahon, *The War of 1812*, 75.

¹⁰ Rauch, *The Campaign of 1812*, 39.

¹¹ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 85.

¹² Rauch, *The Campaign of 1812*, 41.

¹³ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 85.

¹⁴ Stagg, *The War of 1812*, 71.

¹⁵ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 85.

¹⁶ Mahon, *The War of 1812*, 81.

¹⁷ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 87.

¹⁸ Rauch, *The Campaign of 1812*, 41.

- ¹⁹ Ibid., 49.
- ²⁰ Ibid., 53.
- ²¹ Stagg, *The War of 1812*, 71.
- ²² William Eustis to Henry Dearborn, June 24, 1812, quoted in Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 88.
- ²³ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 88.
- ²⁴ Rauch, *The Campaign of 1812*, 54.
- ²⁵ Stagg, *The War of 1812*, 74.
- ²⁶ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1813*, 8.
- ²⁷ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 124.
- ²⁸ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1813*, 9.
- ²⁹ National Archives and Records Administration, Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General, 1805-1821, RG94, George Izard to Thomas Cushing, October 10, 1812.
- ³⁰ National Archives and Records Administration, Letters Sent by the Secretary of War Relating to Military Affairs, 1800-1889, Vol. 6, July 1, 1812-June 29, 1813, RG107, M6, Roll 6, John Armstrong to George Izard, March 12, 1813.
- ³¹ George Izard to James Monroe, October 31, 1812, quoted in Fredriksen, *A Tempered Sword, Untested, Part I*, 12.
- ³² National Archives and Records Administration, Letters Sent by the Secretary of War Relating to Military Affairs, 1800-1889, Vol. 5, RG107, M6, Roll 6, War Department to George Izard, March 12, 1813.
- ³³ Ibid., War Department to George Izard, April 15, 1813.
- ³⁴ National Archives and Records Administration, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Main Series, 1801-1870; December 1812-May 1814, RG107, M221, Roll 54, George Izard to John Armstrong, April 16, 1813.
- ³⁵ Stagg, *The War of 1812*, 56-57.
- ³⁶ National Archives and Records Administration, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Main Series, 1801-1870; December 1812-May 1814, RG107, M221, Roll 54, George Izard to John Armstrong, April 28, 1813.

- ³⁷ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-22 5-2.
- ³⁸ Ibid., 3-3.
- ³⁹ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1813*, 12.
- ⁴⁰ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 134.
- ⁴¹ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1813*, 15.
- ⁴² Mahon, *The War of 1812*, 143.
- ⁴³ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1813*, 16; Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 135.
- ⁴⁴ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 137.
- ⁴⁵ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1813*, 18.
- ⁴⁶ Stagg, *The War of 1812*, 87.
- ⁴⁷ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1813*, 20.
- ⁴⁸ Stagg, *The War of 1812*, 87.
- ⁴⁹ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 137.
- ⁵⁰ Stagg, *The War of 1812*, 88.
- ⁵¹ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1813*, 40.
- ⁵² John Armstrong, October 5, 1813, quoted in Mahon, *The War of 1812*, 207-208.
- ⁵³ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1813*, 41.
- ⁵⁴ Mahon, *The War of 1812*, 208.
- ⁵⁵ John C. Fredriksen, "The War of 1812 in Northern New York: General George Izard's Journal of the Chateaugay Campaign," *New York History* 76, no. 2 (April 1995): 174.
- ⁵⁶ Fredriksen, *A Tempered Sword, Untested, Part I*, 12.
- ⁵⁷ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 142.
- ⁵⁸ Robert Purdy to James Wilkinson, not dated, in *Official Letters of the Military and Naval Officers of the United States During the War with Great Britain*, ed. John Brannan (Washington, DC: Way and Gideon, 1823), 275.

- ⁵⁹ Stagg, *The War of 1812*, 102.
- ⁶⁰ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1813*, 42.
- ⁶¹ Fredriksen, *General Izard's Journal of the Chateauguay Campaign*, 188.
- ⁶² Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1813*, 44.
- ⁶³ William D. Lighthall, *An Account of the Battle of Chateauguay: Being a Lecture Delivered at Ormstown, March 8th, 1889* (Montreal, Canada: W. Drysdale and Co., 1889), 19.
- ⁶⁴ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1813*, 44.
- ⁶⁵ Wade Hampton to John Armstrong, November 1, 1813, in *Official Letters of the Military and Naval Officers of the United States During the War with Great Britain*, 251.
- ⁶⁶ Ibid.
- ⁶⁷ Fredriksen, *A Tempered Sword, Untested, Part I*, 13.
- ⁶⁸ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-22, 4-1.
- ⁶⁹ Fredriksen, *General Izard's Journal of the Chateauguay Campaign*, 198-199.
- ⁷⁰ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1813*, 52.

CHAPTER 4

MAJOR GENERAL IZARD AND THE RIGHT DIVISION

The President does not appear to feel much anxiety about our situation . . . since he has retired to Montpelier and left the management of the affairs of the nation to his Secretaries! whose geniuses are exerted more to secure a passport to the next presidential chair than for the interest and welfare of the country.

— Lieutenant Jacob B. Varnum, Letter to his father,
Massachusetts Senator Joseph B. Varnum (May 24, 1814)

American attempts to bring the war with Great Britain to a quick decision in 1812 and 1813 all ended in failure. Forces along the Canadian border achieved mixed results. Naval engagements on Lake Erie contributed to decisive victory at the Battle of the Thames and recapture of Fort Detroit.¹ However, outcomes in the west did not contribute to success in other theaters. The British controlled the Niagara frontier and defeated all American attempts to capture Montreal. Up to this point in the war, Britain could not devote a preponderance of its forces to North America due to its ongoing war with France. Napoleon's capitulation in March 1814 freed up large numbers of British soldiers for service in North America. The United States needed to quickly overcome its deficiency in leadership and solve remaining organizational issues before the influx of British reinforcements became decisive.

This chapter will describe the strategic setting of the war as the United States made preparations for the 1814 campaign season. It will explore Izard's leadership qualities as he promoted to major general and assumed command of the 9th Military District's Right Division on Lake Champlain. The chapter will also assess Izard's interactions with key individuals and command decisions he made while preparing his forces at Plattsburg, during his movement to Sackett's Harbor, and his actions on the

Niagara Peninsula. The goal is to provide a deep analysis of Major General Izard's performance to determine whether his leadership furthered or hindered the strategic and operational goals of the theater of operations.

Strategic Setting: 1814 Operational Plans

In order to win the war before Great Britain could transport reinforcements from Europe, the Madison administration would need to increase the size of the Army, replace its aging and ineffective leadership, and settle on an overall strategy. Congress voted to expand the authorized strength of the Army to 62,500 men in early 1814, which included 45 infantry regiments, four regiments of riflemen, three of artillery, two of light dragoons, and one of light artillery.² They attempted to boost recruitment numbers by raising the enlistment bonus from \$40 to \$124 and provided additional recruiters to regimental commanders.³ These measures fell short, resulting in an increase in the size of the Army to approximately 40,000 troops for the start of the active campaign season.

President Madison and Secretary of War John Armstrong immediately set out to improve the Army's senior leadership. General Dearborn and General Lewis were reassigned to inactive theaters while General Hampton resigned his commission in protest when General Wilkinson tried to pin the failed 1813 campaign to capture Montreal on him.⁴ Armstrong recommended Izard and Thomas Flounoy, who was commanding in New Orleans, for promotion to major general in December 1813. Curiously, the Secretary failed to include Andrew Jackson and Jacob Brown; arguably the most successful fighting generals of the war. It is suggested that Armstrong made his major general nominations to eliminate the competition for the position he desired for himself; promotion to lieutenant general.⁵ To correct Armstrong's oversight, President

Madison nominated Brigadier Generals Brown and Izard for promotion to major general and the Senate confirmed them both on January 24, 1814, with Izard's promotion taking precedence. To further reinforce their efforts to improve the senior leadership of the army, the administration promoted the following promising colonels to brigadier general: Alexander Macomb, Thomas A. Smith, Daniel Bissell, Edmund P. Gaines, Winfield Scott, and Eleazar W. Ripley.⁶

After Major General Wilkinson's defeat at the Battle of Crysler's Farm in November 1813, he settled into winter quarters at French Mills. Madison and Armstrong believed that cutting British lines of communication along the St. Lawrence River from Montreal to Lake Ontario would prove decisive. To support his upcoming campaign plans, Armstrong began moving American forces during the winter months. On January 20, 1814, the War Department directed Wilkinson to abandon French Mills and "after detaching General Brown with two thousand men and a competent proportion of your field and battering cannon to Sackett's Harbor, you will fall back with the residue of your force, stores and baggage, &c., to Plattsburg."⁷ Although Wilkinson was unaware of Armstrong's intentions with Brown's westward movement, he decided to launch an operation toward Montreal to serve as a diversion and cover for his previous failures. On March 30, he crossed the border with 4,000 poorly equipped troops. Confronted by 200 British regulars and Canadian militiamen defending a mill along the La Colle River, Wilkinson ended the offensive and returned to New York when it became clear that the cost of an assault would be high.⁸ Wilkinson would discover the price for his latest failure once he returned to Plattsburg. General Wilkinson was relieved from command on

April 12, 1814 pending a court-martial for the failure of his ill-advised invasion of Lower Canada.

After relieving Wilkinson, Armstrong reorganized military forces within the 9th Military District to include two divisions and opted not to appoint a new commander. Izard would command the Right Division on Lake Champlain and Brown would command the Left Division, which was responsible for the area from Buffalo to Ogdensburg (see figure 7).⁹ Armstrong directed Izard and Brown to command their assigned division with each general receiving orders directly from the War Department. He tried to avoid the unity of command issues he experienced with Hampton and Wilkinson by indicating that Izard, by virtue of him outranking Brown, would command when the two were united for combined operations.



Figure 7. United States 9th Military District, 1814

Source: Created by author.

A lack of territorial boundaries between the two divisions to demarcate defensive responsibilities further demonstrated Armstrong's mismanagement of the 9th Military District command situation. He expected Izard and Brown to coordinate with each other but did not explicitly communicate this expectation to his commanders, resulting in several missed operational opportunities during the 1814 campaign. In 1813, Armstrong traveled north to plan the campaign directly with his commanders; however, illness in 1814 kept him in Washington. His attempts to personally coordinate the activities of Brown and Izard through correspondence led to inefficiency and confusion.¹⁰ This confusion would lead to a virtual surrender of control to local commanders who, although competent tactical commanders, often directed their efforts toward objectives of lesser strategic importance.

The American War Effort Shifts to the West

On February 28, 1814, Armstrong sent Brown two letters providing his guidance for a potential attack of opportunity.¹¹ The first letter was intended to direct his attention toward Kingston and the second described an attack along the Niagara frontier "to mask your object." Armstrong believed that Lieutenant General Sir George Prevost would attempt to re-establish himself on Lake Erie in the coming months, but to do so he would first need to weaken points of his line in the east; most likely either Kingston or Montreal. If Brown discovered that the British weakened the garrison at Kingston he should hazard an attack across the ice in a *coup de main* if several conditions were met: good roads, good weather, considerable troop reduction at Kingston, and "full and hearty cooperation" from Commodore Chauncey.

Unfortunately, Brown and Chauncey misinterpreted Armstrong's plan. Both men agreed that an attack against Kingston was too risky, but Chauncey convinced Brown that it was the Secretary of War's intent for him to operationalize the instructions set forth in the second letter should they not act upon the first.¹² Brown did not receive clarifying instructions from Armstrong until April 8, well into the march of his troops for the Niagara frontier. Instead of redirecting Brown toward Kingston or Montreal, Armstrong was content to leave the outcome of the campaign to chance, stating "if you hazard anything by this mistake, correct it promptly by returning to your post. If on the other hand you left the Harbor with a competent force for its defense, go on & prosper. Good consequences are sometimes the result of mistakes."¹³

Convinced that American forces could not rely on friendly control of Lake Ontario during the 1814 campaign season, Armstrong recommended Brown's concept of operations on the Niagara Peninsula to President Madison on April 30.¹⁴ On June 7, very late in the campaign season, Madison issued his strategy for coordinated operations in the central and western theaters. General Brown was directed "to cross the river, capture Fort Erie, march on Chippawa, risk a combat, menace Fort George, and *if assured of the ascendancy and co-operation of the fleet*, to seize and fortify Burlington Heights, &c," which guarded the road between York and objectives along the upper lakes.¹⁵ The capture of Burlington Heights would cut British ground supply lines to Mackinac, an American outpost lost earlier in the war, allowing for its recapture.¹⁶ Retention of Burlington Heights would require Brown to protect his long lines of communication and coordination with Chauncey for extensive resupply by water. However, Madison failed to order Chauncey to seize control of Lake Ontario and the latter felt no obligation to

coordinate his activities with Brown unless Commodore Sir James Yeo was brought to battle.¹⁷ As it turned out, that critical lake battle would never take place but Brown began the campaign hoping Chauncey would provide support when required.

The Right Division: Lake Champlain and Plattsburg

Izard continued to convalesce in Philadelphia for several weeks following his transfer from winter quarters in Plattsburg and reported himself ready to assume his duties.¹⁸ On April 7, 1814, Secretary of War Armstrong appointed him to serve as the president of a General Court Martial for Major General Wilkinson's trial.¹⁹ Armstrong directed Izard to meet with Wilkinson at Lake George, New York to ask for his assent to being tried by a General Court Martial composed of the minimum legal number. After questioning why the General Order did not have the sanction of President Madison, Wilkinson provided his response.

In reply to your Question, I answer, that my extreme Anxiety for Trial will induce me to wave the privilege secured by law, however dangerous the precedent may be, and submit to be tried by a General Court Martial of Five General Officers; but I must know the charges preferred against me before I can consent to make any further concession.

Noting that the assembled General Court Martial was not composed of five general officers, Izard considered his reply a dissent to a trial by the available officers and ended the proceedings. Izard travelled from Lake George to Plattsburg where he assumed command of the Northern Army on May 3, 1814, which was reorganized as the Right Division one week later.²⁰

The Right Division consisted of seven infantry regiments organized into three brigades commanded by the talented and accomplished brigadiers: Alexander Macomb, Thomas A. Smith, and Daniel Bissell.²¹ These brigades were augmented by five

companies of artillery, with five to six guns each, and two or three squadrons of mounted troops consisting of approximately 50 men each with light dragoons for use as scouts, guides, and messengers.²² Izard spent his first three days in command examining the troops at Plattsburg and reported to Armstrong his disappointment both in their number and quality. He found with very few exceptions that they were deficient in all the requisites of regular soldiers.

Their clothing and equipment are in a wretched state,--their proficiency in field manoeuvres, and even the rudiments of exercise, is lamentably small,--and an undue proportion of them are on the sick list. Of those who appear under arms, a very great number are unfit to take the field, in consequence of indispositions contracted in the last movement to the Lacolle.²³

Brigadier General Macomb's assessment of the troops he provided Izard from Burlington was even bleaker, noting, "you have no conception of the incapacity & ignorance of the officers appointed to the new rgts, at least those that have joined at this place & Vergennes; it will be impossible to make an army with such materials!"²⁴ Izard immediately recognized the need to use his leadership and organizational skills to transform the Right Division into an effective fighting force. During the summer of 1814, he would achieve as much in this regard as his former subordinate, Winfield Scott.

Izard's first task was to establish a camp of instruction for his new troops. He noted the Army lacked a standardized drill manual and "different systems of instruction have been adopted by the officers of this division."²⁵ Izard selected Von Steuben's *Blue Book* as the regulations for the troops under his command, noting that "as an elementary work I know of none superior to Baron Von Steuben's and it appears to me perfectly practicable to effect any of the modern movements upon the principles laid down in that work."²⁶ Izard's second task was to increase the etiquette and training standards of his

officer corps. Many civilians in the area were shocked by the excessive use of profanity and the general demanded a more professional demeanor from his officers.²⁷ He implemented a strict regimen of discipline for all officers and imposed swift punishments for those who failed to comply with the regulations. The lack of discipline was so rampant that in mid-July Izard lamented “I have more than once exerted the privilege of pardoning, in order to empty the provost prison; but it is rapidly repeopled.”²⁸ However, he felt his efforts were paying off and that “with better officers, especially of the lower grades, in a few weeks they would be equal to the finest corps in any foreign service.”

Secretary of War Armstrong provided limited guidance to Izard as to the goals of the Right Division during the 1814 campaign season. On May 14, he informed the general that the objects of attack were Burlington and York.²⁹ Armstrong postulated that in order for the British to maintain these posts, they would have to weaken themselves in Lower Canada, notably Kingston or Montreal. If Kingston were stripped of troops to reinforce Burlington and York, then he would instruct Brigadier General Gaines to attack from Sackett’s Harbor. Should the British redirect troops from Montreal to the defense of those posts, Izard would avail himself of the opportunity to attack. What the Secretary of War failed to plan for was a scenario in which the British reinforced their garrison at Montreal. As events unfolded along Lake Ontario, Izard was to continue building his division in the hopes that recruiting efforts would fill the regiments by August 1, so “the campaign may be a good one.”

Prior to receiving specific orders from Armstrong, Izard conducted an assessment of his area of operations and concluded that the Right Division’s sector was severely outnumbered and the British were likely to attack through the area. To counter this threat

he moved a significant portion of his forces to positions north of Plattsburg to meet the potential British attack with the remainder retained nearby the city for its protection.³⁰ Smith's brigade took up positions around Champlain while 800 soldiers under Colonel Pearce were located at the village of Chazy. Once a number of detachments on the march to Plattsburg arrived, Izard planned to take the field near the Canadian border. He had full confidence in the course of action he had selected and the prospects of accomplishing the mission, stating that "every thing in the proceeding of the enemy leads me to expect a serious attack. I shall endeavour to draw him to this side of the Great Chazy River, and then give him battle. He will outnumber us; but I hope for a successful termination."

After moving his forces into position, Izard finally received guidance from Armstrong on June 22 about his role in the 1814 campaign strategy. He informed Izard that the Right Division would establish a strongly fortified post on the south bank of the St. Lawrence River and garrison it with a competent force of 1,500 men.³¹ The goal of this fortification was to provide protection for a flotilla of armed galleys, planned for construction at Sackett's Harbor, tasked with intercepting British water communications between Montreal and Kingston. Armstrong indicated that the War Department would employ an engineer to select the site. He envisioned "the moment for beginning this establishment will be that which assures to us the command of lake Ontario." On July 3, he asked Izard to send Major Joseph G. Totten, one of his engineers, to survey a site located about 16 miles east of Ogdensburg.³² Despite the hardship it would impose on his division, Izard dutifully complied with Armstrong's request and submitted a copy of Totten's findings on July 12.³³ Izard received no further guidance on the matter, possibly due to events on the Niagara Peninsula shifting his focus.

In his guidance, Armstrong also directed Izard to select, establish, and garrison a post on Lake Champlain that could cooperate with and cover the American flotilla, and exclude the British flotilla therefrom. Izard had anticipated the need to provide security for the fleet after discussions with Captain Thomas Macdonough, the flotilla commander, and prepared defensive positions around Cumberland Bay. Intelligence reports indicated a substantial build-up of British forces to the north and he predicted that a force preparing to attack Plattsburg would proceed south along the road from Beekmantown.³⁴ Izard's defensive strategy called for Macdonough's ships to protect American defensive positions in Plattsburg from the Royal Navy while at the same time adding their guns to his artillery. To lend some protection to the American ships, he moved a battery of four eighteen-pounders up on Cumberland Head and erected field works and garrisoned the fortification.³⁵ Izard also directed the construction of three redoubts (Fort Moreau, Fort Brown, and Fort Scott) between the Lake Champlain shore and Saranac River to bolster Plattsburg's defenses.³⁶

During his time at Plattsburg, General Izard demonstrated his capacity to serve as an organizational leader of the Right Division. He built upon his direct leader experience with training soldiers to develop a uniform system of drill instruction throughout the organization. Izard's leadership experience at the tactical level allowed him to understand and synchronize the activities of multiple systems across a range of activities.³⁷ These activities included ensuring his troops were trained by competent junior officers, paid in a timely manner, protected from harsh discipline, and provided uniforms and equipment. Izard accomplished this indirectly by empowering his highly competent brigade commanders to execute missions, often at a distance.

Organizational leaders who can extend influence beyond their chain of command are better able to impact the operational situation within their area of operations.³⁸ Izard demonstrated his ability to shape the operational environment of Lake Champlain through his interactions with Commodore Macdonough. The navy experienced chronic manpower shortages and came to rely on the army to provide soldiers to man naval vessels and protect shipyards. Despite the hardships it caused his organization and Armstrong's opposition to the practice, Izard supported Macdonough's requests for forces. The close cooperation between the army and navy enabled Izard to transport the soldiers and provisions of Macomb's brigade from Burlington to Plattsburg and likely contributed to Macdonough accepting the mission of bringing his flotilla into Cumberland Bay to provide fire support for ground forces and confront the Royal Navy.³⁹ Izard's efforts to build an effective fighting force from the remnants of the failed 1813 campaign, defensive preparation of Plattsburg, and close cooperation with the Navy would later enable the defeat a major British attack as Izard marched to the Left Division's relief on the Niagara frontier in September.

The Left Division and the Niagara Peninsula

In April 1814, the Left Division consisted of five infantry regiments, one battalion of riflemen, one company of light dragoons, and several artillery companies.⁴⁰ General Brown immediately set about overcoming the many logistical and administrative issues confronting his organization. He left a small force under Edmund Gaines at Sackett's Harbor to protect the naval squadron and placed Winfield Scott in charge of the bulk of the division's forces at Buffalo. Brown directed Scott to begin preparing the troops for an invasion of Canada. Scott quickly instituted a rigorous training regimen for the men and

ran them through individual and company drill six days a week.⁴¹ In addition to his training accomplishments, Scott emphasized the virtues of discipline, military courtesy, and subordination as essential to the organization. Scott endeavored to eliminate disease from his command, stressing in a published order that “discipline is but the *Second* object in the Brigade. The first is the health of the troops.”⁴² As additional troops reported for duty at Buffalo, Brown organized them as the Second Brigade commanded by Eleazar Ripley. Taken together, these efforts contributed to the creation of an effective striking force for upcoming operations.

Brown initiated the Left Division’s invasion of Canada on July 3, 1814 with Scott landing a portion of his First Brigade along the shoreline north of Fort Erie and a portion of Ripley’s Second Brigade landing to the south with the goal of surrounding the bastion (see figure 8).⁴³ Major Thomas Buck, who commanded 137 British soldiers at the fort, believed his position could not withstand a bombardment by American artillery or a direct assault. He surrendered Fort Erie and his men to American forces after brief negotiations. On July 4, the remainder of the Left Division crossed into Canadian territory as the division moved toward the Chippawa River. Major General Phineas Riall, commander of the British Right Division, directed troops from Fort George to contest American movements on the peninsula.⁴⁴ He had a fortified position at the bridge crossing the Chippawa consisting of a few blockhouses on the northern shore and a *tete-de-pont* protecting the bridge on the southern shore.⁴⁵ Noting the strength of British defenses along the Chippawa River, Scott decided to bed down for the evening to await the arrival of reinforcements and artillery.



Figure 8. Lake Ontario Operations, 1814

Source: Created by author.

The Battle of Chippawa began early on July 5, 1814 with Riall sending a contingent of western Native American warriors into the forest to harass the Americans in camp.⁴⁶ Brown directed Brigadier General Peter B. Porter to take his brigade of Iroquois warriors and Pennsylvania militiamen to engage the enemy. While fierce no-quarter combat occurred in the forest, Brown spotted dust rising from the direction of the bridge over the Chippawa River. Riall's advance had begun. Brown ordered Scott to take his brigade across Street's Creek and engage the advancing British forces. Initially believing the gray-jacketed troops of Scott's First Brigade were militiamen, Riall was surprised to see the Americans deploy into line formation despite heavy British artillery fire and exclaimed, "Why, these are regulars!"⁴⁷ American and British forces were

evenly matched during the battle. Riall commanded 1,400 infantry and six guns (two heavy 24-pounders) while Scott led 1,350 infantry and seven light guns.⁴⁸ After a ferocious battle, the British suffered approximately 500 casualties and the Americans 325. Riall pulled his forces back across the bridge and withdrew to Fort George to preserve the division.

An assessment of Fort George led Brown to conclude that he could not breach its walls without additional artillery. He soon learned that siege guns from Gaines were blocked in port at Sackett's Harbor and illness would prevent Chauncey and his squadron from sailing to assist the division.⁴⁹ Upon reading Riall's after-action report on the Battle of Chippawa, Major General Sir Gordon Drummond, commander of British forces in Upper Canada, dispatched several battalions from Kingston to reinforce the Niagara Peninsula. He arrived at Fort Niagara determined to force the Americans out of Canada.⁵⁰ On July 25, an estimated 3,600 British troops and 2,800 soldiers of the Left Division met at Lundy's Lane, several miles north of the Chippawa River. The Battle of Lundy's Lane occurred in three phases and lasted well into the night. Scott, reinforced by Ripley's brigade, aggressively attacked the British left flank and in concert with an attack on their center by Colonel Miller's 21st Regiment, forced them from their position atop the ridge. The British withdrew after several counterattacks failed to dislodge the Americans.

While the Americans and British both claimed victory in the encounter, the Americans controlled the ridge and the British left the field. Casualties were roughly equal with 861 American and 878 British killed, wounded, and missing or captured.⁵¹ Among the American senior leadership, Brown and Scott were wounded during the battle, with Scott so seriously wounded he would see no more action during the war. Both

British generals were wounded at the Battle of Lundy's Lane, with Riall also being captured. Brown transferred command to Gaines while he convalesced at Batavia, New York. Brown ordered Ripley to defend Fort Erie with the remnants of the Left Division.

After an initial attempt to dislodge the Americans from Fort Erie failed, Drummond sent more than 2,000 British troops to try again.⁵² On August 15, he directed a three-pronged night attack against the fort. The British successfully penetrated one of Fort Erie's bastions and forced the Americans to fall back into a stone barracks. Stalemate ensued until a massive explosion in the bastion killed or wounded all of the British attackers, effectively ending the battle. Casualties from the assault on Fort Erie totaled 905 British and 74 American.⁵³ Brown's precarious situation at Fort Erie compelled Secretary of War Armstrong to order General Izard and the Right Division to assist the Left Division on the Niagara Peninsula.

Strategic Miscalculation: Growing Danger in the North

On July 19, Izard informed Armstrong that fortification construction at Plattsburg was progressing fast and predicted that by early August he would have 5,000 men to confront the British in Lower Canada.⁵⁴ With his division, Izard felt he could "defend this frontier against a greater force," however it was "entirely inadequate to the conquest of any important part of the country, with the intention of retaining it." Having recently learned of Brown's victory at Chippawa, he voiced his concern for the safety of the Left Division and asked if he should move troops to the St. Lawrence to threaten the rear of Kingston if Brown needed assistance. Armstrong referred the question to President Madison who stated, "it ought certainly be at the discretion of Izard to accommodate his movements to those of the Enemy, and to his information from other commanders."⁵⁵

Madison appears to have overestimated the level of cooperation between Izard and Brown. During this time, he started questioning Armstrong's interactions with the Army's senior leadership.⁵⁶ After reviewing the correspondence between the Secretary of War and his officers, Madison rebuked Armstrong for his handling of the campaign thus far and prompted him to have Izard provide some relief to Brown's division.

Believing that Brown's movements in Upper Canada had compelled Prevost to send large detachments of troops from Montreal to reinforce Drummond, Armstrong would make a serious strategic error. He ordered Izard to move 4,000 soldiers of the Right Division from Plattsburg to either attack Kingston or embark for the west end of Lake Ontario to unite his forces with the Left Division. Izard strongly protested Armstrong's orders, believing that a British attack on American positions on Lake Champlain was imminent.⁵⁷ Izard explained that his change of mind on an attack towards Kingston was due to learning the full extent of Prevost's forces massing on the border. Armstrong thought Izard's assessment of the threat to Plattsburg was greatly exaggerated and ignored reports that 16,000 veterans of the war on the Spanish Peninsula were massing near Montreal.⁵⁸ Izard warned the Secretary of War that reducing American forces on Lake Champlain would result in disaster.

I will make the movement you direct, if possible; but I shall do it with the apprehension of risking the force under my command, and with the certainty that every thing in this vicinity, but the lately erected works at Plattsburg and Cumberland Head, will, in less than three days after my departure, be in the possession of the enemy. He is in force superior to mine in my front; he daily threatens attack on my position at Champlain; we are in hourly expectation of a serious conflict.⁵⁹

Armstrong was unmoved by Izard's protests and of the opinion "that it has become good policy on our part, to carry the war as far to the westward as possible,

particularly while we have an ascendancy on the lakes.”⁶⁰ He directed to Izard move his force from Plattsburg and while doing so, increase his provisions on Lake Ontario while reducing them on Lake Champlain. Not receiving a reversal of his orders, Izard reiterated his opposition given the presence of an enemy in superior force immediately before him. “I must not be responsible for the consequences of abandoning my present strong position,” he warned. “I will obey orders, and execute them as well as I know how.”⁶¹ Izard reorganized 4,000 men of his division into two brigades commanded by Smith and Bissell. The remainder of the Right Division, 1,500 effective troops, including the sick and convalescing, would stay behind under Macomb to defend Plattsburg.

After gathering extensive information on the routes to the west and availability of food and transport animals, Izard called a council of war with his principal officers to decide between a northern or southern route. The northern route would take them north of the Adirondacks to Malone and along the St. Lawrence River to Sackett’s Harbor. The southern route required travelling south to Schenectady, heading west along the Mohawk River, and proceeding northwest to Sackett’s Harbor (see figure 9).⁶² Although the northern route was shorter (200 miles compared to 300 miles), the southern route had comparatively better roads, passed through more settled territory, and offered a better chance of avoiding attack by Britain’s Native American allies. Asked if they should “proceed by Chateaugay, Ogdensburg and the right bank of the St. Lawrence, or by the south end of lake George and Schenectady,” the council unanimously answered, “By Schenectady.” After acquiring enough wagons to support the division’s march, Izard departed for Sackett’s Harbor via the southern route. Izard’s fears of the British

advancing on Plattsburg only a few days after his departure were almost prophetic as Prevost would lead 12,000 men southward less than a week later.⁶³



Figure 9. Two Routes to Sackett's Harbor

Source: Created by author.

With too few troops remaining at Plattsburg after Armstrong ordered 4,000 men to head west, Macomb decided to abandon the fortification on Cumberland Head and consolidate his forces and artillery behind the fortifications that Izard commissioned: Forts Moreau, Brown, and Scott (see figure 10). The delay of Prevost's attack and Macdonough's victory over Captain George Downie's squadron in Cumberland Bay on September 11, 1814 prevented a coordinated land and sea attack, allowing Macomb to hold off a number of British attempts to assault the works.⁶⁴ Believing the Royal Navy's defeat on Lake Champlain would allow the Americans to interdict British supply lines;

Prevost abandoned the effort and withdrew back to Canada. The Battle of Plattsburg resulted in 160 British casualties and 100 American. The press wasted no time publishing articles critical of Izard's defensive preparation as "incompetent to the defence of that important point."⁶⁵ He rightly pointed out to Monroe that he erected the works under the direction of Totten, left behind three good companies of artillery, and provided "artillery, ammunition and stores of every kind, completely secured from annoyance."

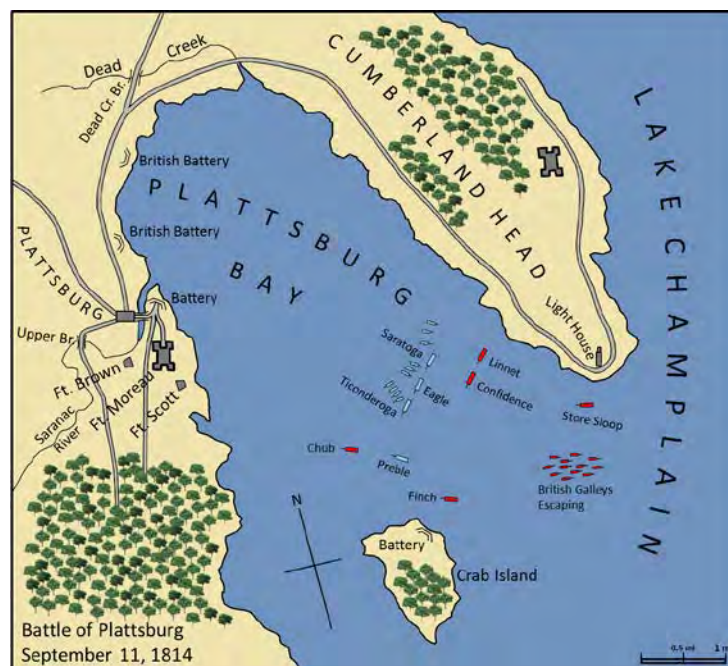


Figure 10. Plattsburg Defense, 1814

Source: Created by author.

Niagara Operations, Culmination, and Controversy

The Right Division reached the head of Lake George within a few days of departing Plattsburg, where Izard learned of the British attack on Washington D.C.

Madison's growing impatience with Armstrong and public outrage over the burning of the capital led to Armstrong's resignation on September 4. It must have pleased Izard to learn that Armstrong's replacement at the War Department was James Monroe, his long-time confidant. He continued his journey over rough terrain at a measured pace of 15 miles a day interspersed with a few days of rest.⁶⁶ Well aware of the disastrous consequences General Hampton's army experienced during the forced march to Chateaugay, Izard wanted to protect the health of his soldiers "to bring them in fresh and ready for immediate service."⁶⁷ On September 16, the Right Division arrived at Sackett's Harbor after 19 days of travel and Izard met with Commodore Chauncey to discuss their options for a combined attack against Kingston.

Immediately upon his arrival in Sackett's Harbor, Izard received an urgent message from General Brown describing the dire position of his army on the Niagara Peninsula. "I will not conceal from you that I consider the fate of this army doubtful unless speedy relief is affected; and my opinion is that the wisest course will be to effect a junction."⁶⁸ Brown tried to further entice Izard by suggesting that together they could defeat Drummond and recapture Fort Niagara.

If you think proper to land north of fort George, and I could know the moment of your landing so as to press upon the enemy, it would perhaps be the shortest cut to your object, the capture of Drummond and his army. He cannot escape, provided you can promptly form a junction with my present command. We have artillery sufficient for every object in the field, and perhaps sufficient for the reduction of Niagara.

Izard decided to support Brown's request for assistance and arranged the water transport of as many troops as Chauncey's ships could hold while the remainder travelled overland. Violent storms delayed the embarkation of the division and continued adverse winds compelled Izard to disembark at the mouth of the Genessee River. Bad roads and

difficulty with procuring horses and wagons to facilitate movement further delayed his arrival in Batavia until September 27. Despite the irritation it caused others, Izard's deliberate movement of the Right Division enabled him to deliver a combat-ready force to the area of operations.

Izard informed Brown of his intention to besiege Fort Niagara, an operation that would require him to wait for the arrival of his artillerists and dismounted dragoons marching from Sackett's Harbor. As he arrived in Lewiston, Izard received a letter from Monroe placing him in command of the entire 9th Military District; undoing one of Armstrong's many poor decisions.⁶⁹ Brown initially agreed with the plan but his growing impatience compelled him and Brigadier General Porter to convince Izard to abandon the effort until after dealing with Drummond. "We prevailed upon him to give up his absurd plan, which however successful, would give him a useless fortress and a few convalescents and invalids who made up the garrison."⁷⁰ This was an interesting statement for Brown to make considering he made the suggestion to retake Fort Niagara in his initial correspondence with the general.

Izard agreed to move his division across the Niagara River and intended to cross the strait at a point south of the Chippawa River. Once across, he would link up with Brown so their entire force would march together to confront the British. Brown was tasked with providing ample boats for the crossing. On October 7, he assured Izard that enough boats were available and positioned near Fort Schlosser.⁷¹ Upon his arrival at the mouth of the Cayuga Creek the next day, Izard discovered only enough boats to carry 750 men across the river at a time. Crossing the river in four waves, "in the face of the enemy's batteries and intrenchments at Chippewa," would expose the first landing group

to attack while awaiting the remainder of the force.⁷² Izard prudently decided to cross further south at Black Rock, near Buffalo and on October 12, the first elements of the Right Division finally arrived at Fort Erie.

Brown and his men became increasingly frustrated with what they perceived as Izard's lack of urgency, remarking "the march from Genessee River to Black Rock nearly exhausted my stock of faith and patience, not so much, however, as to render me incapable of repressing the murmurings of my faithful companions."⁷³ From his perspective, Izard was also frustrated by the situation at Fort Erie. "All the artillery and all the ordnance stores on this frontier, are inadequate to the siege of one of the enemy's fortresses. Three fourths of the arms of the troops from the westward, are unfit for service. The severe season is approaching."⁷⁴ Recognizing that the campaign season would end soon, Izard combined his two divisions and moved the Northern Army of 5,500 regulars and 800 militia volunteers near the Chippawa River in an attempt to maneuver Drummond out from behind his defenses.⁷⁵

On October 16, he decided to test British defenses at the Chippawa River by deploying the light batteries of Towson and Archer, the only guns available to him for field use, while Brown's men started cutting a trail toward Lyon's Creek in an attempt to outflank the British. The exchange of fire between both sides led Izard to remark that "it was plain that so far from abandoning their forts, the British were in strength and superior in weight of metal and number of guns."⁷⁶ He pulled all of his forces back from the Chippawa to give Drummond more room to maneuver, hoping this would bring the British to battle. However, he would not be drawn out as General Riall had in July. Yeo's refusal to bring reinforcements to Niagara convinced him that his best course of action

was to remain behind his defenses and allow the Americans to attrit their forces attacking the British position if they dared.

Izard's last attempt to draw out Drummond involved threatening his vulnerable food supply. On October 18, he dispatched the 900 men of Bissell's brigade to seize a quantity of wheat stored at Cook's Mills on Lyon's Creek.⁷⁷ Drummond ordered Colonel Christopher Myers and his brigade of 750 soldiers to follow the Americans to ensure they were not attempting to outflank the British position on the Chippawa River. An encounter in the woods near Lyon's Creek between Bissell's security force and Myers' Canadian *Glengarry Light Infantry Fencibles* led the American commander to deploy his forces toward the British line.⁷⁸ Not wishing to be decisively engaged, Myers ordered the *Glengarries* to withdraw. Both sides fired at each other from long range until the British withdrew. Myers had estimated the size of the American force and determined they were not a threat to the British position. Bissell's men destroyed 200 bushels of wheat intended for Drummond's army, leaving the mill intact, and returned to Fort Erie. Losses on both sides were relatively light, with 67 American and 36 British casualties. Although not a decisive battle, it reflected credit upon Izard, who had prepared his soldiers well enough to face the veterans of the war against Napoleon.

On October 16, Izard learned by express from Sackett's Harbor that Chauncey had relinquished control of Lake Ontario and "with the whole of his fleet, has retired into port and is throwing up batteries for its protection."⁷⁹ Izard lamented that this turn of events had left him in enemy territory without naval or logistical support, severely limiting his ability to retain any gains he should acquire through operations on the Niagara Peninsula.

This defeats all the objects of the operations by land in this quarter. I may turn Chippewa, and should General Drummond not retire, may succeed in giving him a great deal of trouble; but if he falls back on fort George, or Burlington Heights, every step I take in pursuit, exposes me to be cut off by the large reinforcements it is in the power of the enemy to throw in twenty-four hours upon my flank or rear.

Armstrong's tardiness in utilizing the Right Division in an active role, Izard's measured rate of march to preserve combat power, and early onset of winter were conspiring to limit what the general could hope to accomplish with the remainder of the campaign season. General Brown realized that Izard no longer intended to outflank Drummond and his impatience with the general compelled him to avail himself of the opportunity to take his troops back to Sackett's Harbor to defend the location during the winter. On October 20, Brown marched his division through adverse road and weather conditions, arriving in Sackett's Harbor after 19 days of travel.⁸⁰

As cold and wet conditions signaled the approach of winter, the health of his army became Izard's primary concern. "The dysentery has already commenced its ravages among all ranks, and our sick list is daily increasing."⁸¹ With over 2,000 sick and wounded soldiers filling hospitals in Buffalo and Williamsville, Izard ordered the evacuation of as many as possible to Greenbush, New York for better treatment.⁸² Confident that a direct assault on Drummond's defensive position would not accomplish anything of strategic value, Izard ended the 1814 campaign season and began moving his forces to Black Rock to establish winter quarters. Although Izard was unwilling to sacrifice his army for an expedient tactical victory, he still lamented his perceived lack of options to Monroe.

I confess, sir, that I am greatly embarrassed. At the head of the most efficient army which the United States have possessed during this war, much must be expected from me—and yet I can discern no object which can be achieved at this point, worthy of the risk which will attend its attempt. The relief of Major General

Brown's force is completely effected. I have presented the army under my command in the open field, and under the enemy's intrenchments for battle, which he prudently declines. The opinions of all the principal officers whom I have spoken with on the subject, are against attempts which can result in no national advantage, and which even if successful, would be attended by the unavoidable loss of many men, now more valuable than ever.⁸³

The final and most controversial decision of the 1814 campaign was Izard's decision to abandon Fort Erie. While supervising the crossing of his division across the Niagara River to Black Rock, Izard observed how violent storms "rendered all communication from this shore to the other impracticable, without being driven so low in the strait as would have thrown the boats within the British posts below."⁸⁴ Sources informed him that these storms could last up to three weeks in November and occur throughout the winter. These events forced Izard to "examine maturely the advantages, and inconveniences of retaining fort Erie under the American flag."

I can find not one of the former, (except its being a trophy) which in any point of view would justify my exposing in a weak, ill planned, and hastily repaired redoubt (it scarcely deserves even that humble designation,) some hundreds of valuable officers and men, with the cannon, and various stores, which if it were taken would necessarily fall with it into the hands of the enemy. It is as much unprotected in the winter by a force on this side, as if it were fifty miles off. It commands nothing, not even the entrance of the strait; and should by any untoward accident the naval superiority on lake Erie be recovered by the enemy, the garrison must at any season and in a very short time, throw open their gates to any body that will furnish them with the means of subsistence.

Quartermaster General Robert Swartwout, Bissell, and Totten concurred with Izard's decision to abandon the fort, "each instantly, and unequivocally, expressed their satisfaction." Izard summed up his thoughts succinctly when he informed Brown of his decision. "Finding Fort Erie a useless and burdensome possession, after much reflection I determined to level it to the earth."⁸⁵ After ferrying the garrison, artillery, and provisions

across the river to New York, on November 5, work parties planted explosives and demolished the fortification.

Madison and Monroe both agreed that retaining Fort Erie held no essential advantage and approved of Izard's decision to abandon it. Satisfied that his conduct met with their approval, he started preparing the Northern Army for the 1815 campaign season. Unfortunately, public condemnation over his decision to level Fort Erie began almost as soon as the smoke cleared.⁸⁶ The storm of criticism, much of it personal in nature, weighed heavily on Izard. Frustrated by the negative press and experiencing another long bout of poor health, he offered to resign his commission. Looking to spare Monroe from the controversy, Izard believed that his "voluntary retirement will relieve the department of war from some embarrassment."⁸⁷ Given his many achievements and considering the difficult situation created by Armstrong, Monroe refused to accept his resignation. Although the United States failed to achieve its strategic objectives during the 1814 campaign, the American profession of arms had dramatically improved over the past two years. Much of this improvement is directly attributable to Izard's performance.

According to the Leadership Requirements Model, organizational leaders must develop plans and programs to synchronize the appropriate systems to turn tactical and operational models into action.⁸⁸ General Izard was tasked with moving a division of 4,000 soldiers over 600 miles using a combination of undeveloped roads and water transportation. This movement required the synchronization of several logistical systems to procure draft animals to haul heavy equipment, provide rations for the soldiers, and care for those who became ill along the way. Izard's organizational skills enabled him to perform one of the longest overland marches ever conducted during the war with a force

of that size while maintaining its combat effectiveness. As the Right Division commander, Izard sought commitment rather than compliance from his principal staff officers on particularly difficult or controversial decisions. Commitment originates from a person's desire to have some level of control and self-worth by contributing to the organization.⁸⁹ Izard tried to strengthen commitment to his decision to take a southerly route from Plattsburg to Sackett's Harbor and to abandon Fort Erie using the "participation" method of influence. Involving key leaders during planning ensures a commander's subordinates take stock in the vision and builds a commitment to execute solutions to complex problems.

Izard demonstrated competent leadership through good communication with his Right Division brigade commanders. He used this competency to reach shared understanding of issues his division faced and to generate solutions. Shared information allows subordinates to determine requirements and adapt to complex environments.⁹⁰ While Izard communicated well with his own division, he was unable to clearly convey his intent to Brown and the Left Division when he commanded both organizations. The resulting misunderstanding between the two leaders created conflict and led to frustration on both sides. Brown resented being placed in a subordinate role by Monroe and his aggressive leadership style conflicted with Izard's more measured approach. Perhaps in time the two generals could have developed a more effective partnership, but only having from September to October was not enough time for them to overcome the obstacles that Armstrong's mismanagement of the Northern Theater created. Izard would have to seek redemption elsewhere; however, since peace negotiations would soon bring the war to an end.

¹ Richard V. Barbuto, CMH Pub 74-6, *The Canadian Theater 1814* (Washington, DC: United States Army Center of Military History, 2014), 7.

² Richard W. Stewart, "The War of 1812," in *American Military History, Volume I: The United States Army and the Forging of a Nation, 1775-1917*, ed. Richard W. Stewart (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, U.S. Army, 2005), 149.

³ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1814*, 8.

⁴ Stagg, *The War of 1812*, 117.

⁵ Barbuto, *Niagara 1814*, 106.

⁶ George Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War: Relative to the Military Operations of the American Army Under the Command of Major General Izard, on the Northern Frontier of the United States in the Years 1814 and 1815* (Philadelphia, PA: Thomas Dobson, At the Stone House, 1816), 17-18. John Armstrong to George Izard, May 14, 1814.

⁷ Ernest A. Cruikshank, ed., *The Documentary History of the Campaigns upon the Niagara Frontier in 1812-14, Volume IX: December, 1813, to May, 1814* (Welland, Ontario: Lundy's Lane Historical Society, 1908), 136.

⁸ Barbuto, *Niagara 1814*, 104.

⁹ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1814*, 9.

¹⁰ Barbuto, *Niagara 1814*, 114.

¹¹ Cruikshank, *Documentary History 1812-14, Volume IX*, 201-202.

¹² Barbuto, *Niagara 1814*, 110.

¹³ John Armstrong to Jacob Brown, March 20, 1814, in Barbuto, *Niagara 1814*, 111.

¹⁴ Barbuto, *Niagara 1814*, 113.

¹⁵ John Armstrong, *Notices of the War of 1812, Volume 2* (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1840), 83.

¹⁶ Barbuto, *Staff Ride Handbook for the Niagara Campaigns*, 136.

¹⁷ Ernest A. Cruikshank, ed., *The Documentary History of the Campaign on the Niagara Frontier in 1814, Part I* (Welland, Ontario: Lundy's Lane Historical Society, 1896), 129-130.

¹⁸ National Archives and Records Administration, Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General, 1805-1821, RG94, Washington, DC, George Izard to John Armstrong, March 20, 1814.

¹⁹ National Archives and Records Administration, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Main Series, 1801-1870; December 1812-May 1814, RG107, M221, Roll 54, Washington, DC, George Izard to John Armstrong, April 27, 1814.

²⁰ National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 98, Vol. 442, Book 2, Washington, DC, pg. 1. General Orders, May 3, 1814, stating that Major General George Izard assumed command of the Northern Army, Orderly Books of the Adjutant General, August 1813-June 1815.

²¹ George Izard to John Armstrong, June 25, 1814 and July 31, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 35-40, 57-59.

²² David G. Fitz-Enz, *The Final Invasion* (New York: Cooper Square Press, 2001), 77-8.

²³ George Izard to John Armstrong, May 7, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 2-4.

²⁴ National Archives and Records Administration, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, 1801-1870, Record Group 107, Publication Number M221, Roll 62, Washington, DC, Alexander Macomb to George Izard, May 23, 1814.

²⁵ George Izard to John Armstrong, May 7, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 2-4.

²⁶ George Izard to John Walbach, February 21, 1814, quoted in Fredriksen, *A Tempered Sword, Untested, Part I*, 18.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 14.

²⁸ George Izard to John Armstrong, July 19, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 55.

²⁹ John Armstrong to George Izard, May 14, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 15-16.

³⁰ George Izard to John Armstrong, June 25, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 35-40.

³¹ John Armstrong to George Izard, June 11, 1814, quoted Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 33-34. Izard did not receive this letter until June 22, 1814.

³² John Armstrong to George Izard, June 21, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 43-44. Izard did not receive this letter until July 3, 1814.

³³ George Izard to John Armstrong, July 12, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 52-53.

³⁴ David G. Fitz-Enz, *Hacks, Sycophants, Adventurers, and Heroes: Madison's Commanders in the War of 1812* (Lanham, MD: Taylor Trade Publishing, 2012), 154-155.

³⁵ George Izard to John Armstrong, June 25, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 35-40.

³⁶ Robert S. Quimby, *The U.S. Army in the War of 1812: An Operational and Command Study, Vol. 2* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 1997), 608.

³⁷ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-22, 10-1.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 10-2.

³⁹ David G. Fitz-Enz, *Hacks, Sycophants, Adventurers, and Heroes*, 158.

⁴⁰ Barbuto, *Niagara 1814*, 117.

⁴¹ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1814*, 11.

⁴² Scott's General Order, May 25, 1814, quoted in Barbuto, *Niagara 1814*, 131.

⁴³ Barbuto, *Staff Ride Handbook for the Niagara Campaigns*, 137.

⁴⁴ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1814*, 16.

⁴⁵ Barbuto, *Staff Ride Handbook for the Niagara Campaigns*, 138.

⁴⁶ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1814*, 17.

⁴⁷ Winfield Scott, *Memoirs of Lieut.-General Scott, LL.D.* (New York: Sheldon and Company, 1864), 129.

⁴⁸ Barbuto, *Staff Ride Handbook for the Niagara Campaigns*, 141.

⁴⁹ Barbuto, *Niagara 1814*, 207.

⁵⁰ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1814*, 24.

⁵¹ Barbuto, *Staff Ride Handbook for the Niagara Campaigns*, 151.

- ⁵² Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1814*, 34.
- ⁵³ Barbuto, *Niagara 1814*, 252.
- ⁵⁴ George Izard to John Armstrong, July 19, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 54-56.
- ⁵⁵ Madison to Armstrong, quoted in Barbuto, *Niagara 1814*, 205.
- ⁵⁶ Barbuto, *Niagara 1814*, 205; 254.
- ⁵⁷ George Izard to John Armstrong, August 11, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 65-67.
- ⁵⁸ John C. Fredriksen, "A Tempered Sword, Untested, Part II," *The Journal of America's Military Past* 25, no. 3 (Winter 1999): 6.
- ⁵⁹ George Izard to John Armstrong, August 11, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 65-67.
- ⁶⁰ John Armstrong to George Izard, August 12, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 69-71. Izard did not receive this letter until August 20, 1814.
- ⁶¹ George Izard to John Armstrong, August 20, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 71-72.
- ⁶² Barbuto, *Niagara 1814*, 205 and 255.
- ⁶³ Mahon, *The War of 1812*, 320.
- ⁶⁴ Alexander Macomb to John Armstrong, September 15, 1814, in *Official Letters of the Military and Naval Officers of the United States During the War with Great Britain*, 415-419.
- ⁶⁵ George Izard to James Monroe, October 7, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 97-99.
- ⁶⁶ Barbuto, *Niagara 1814*, 255.
- ⁶⁷ Fredriksen, *A Tempered Sword, Untested, Part II*, 7.
- ⁶⁸ Jacob Brown to George Izard, September 10, 1814 and September 11, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 86-88.
- ⁶⁹ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1814*, 43.

⁷⁰ Jacob Brown to John Armstrong, November 20, 1814, quoted in Fredriksen, *A Tempered Sword, Untested, Part II*, 9.

⁷¹ Barbuto, *Niagara 1814*, 290.

⁷² George Izard to James Monroe, October 16, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 100-104.

⁷³ Jacob Brown to John Armstrong, November 20, 1814, quoted in Fredriksen, *A Tempered Sword, Untested, Part II*, 9-10.

⁷⁴ George Izard to James Monroe, October 16, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 100-104.

⁷⁵ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1814*, 43.

⁷⁶ George Izard to James Monroe, October 16, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 100-104.

⁷⁷ Fredriksen, *A Tempered Sword, Untested, Part II*, 11.

⁷⁸ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1814*, 44.

⁷⁹ George Izard to James Monroe, October 16, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 100-104.

⁸⁰ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1814*, 46.

⁸¹ George Izard to James Monroe, October 23, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 104-106.

⁸² Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1814*, 46.

⁸³ George Izard to James Monroe, October 23, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 104-106.

⁸⁴ George Izard to James Monroe, November 2, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 110-113.

⁸⁵ George Izard to Jacob Brown, November 11, 1814, quoted in Fredriksen, *A Tempered Sword, Untested, Part II*, 12.

⁸⁶ Fredriksen, *A Tempered Sword, Untested, Part II*, 12-13.

⁸⁷ George Izard to James Monroe, December 18, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 130-131.

⁸⁸ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-22, 10-1.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 6-2-6-3.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 6-13.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND ANALYSIS

In the meantime I have strong grounds for thinking that the enemy will risque an attack, an event which . . . I shall have to meet under every possible disadvantage, yet I am very much disposed to hope may be the most fortunate circumstance that can happen, as it will bring us into contact with the enemy at a far cheaper rate than if we were to be the assailants, and may at the same time, I trust, bring to a happy crisis a campaign which has been marked by a series of unlucky circumstances.

— Lieutenant General Sir Gordon Drummond,
Letter to Sir George Prevost (September 14, 1814)

While Major General Izard made preparations for the defense of Plattsburg and Major General Brown confronted Major General Sir Gordon Drummond on the Niagara Peninsula in August 1814, American and British negotiators met in the Belgian city of Ghent to discuss terms for ending the war. As peace negotiations dragged on for months, the administration continued to press Congress to authorize more troops and supplies. Learning from the mistakes of Madison and Armstrong, Monroe started developing a campaign strategy much earlier in the year. He ordered Brown to report to Washington D.C. on January 2, 1815 to discuss future operations. Monroe understood that American efforts toward the Niagara frontier would not achieve the nation's strategic objectives and focused his planning efforts towards breaking the British line of communication along the St. Lawrence River.¹ He entrusted Brown with command of the entire proposed invasion army and immediately tasked him to begin raising the necessary forces.

This chapter will provide an overview of the final months of Izard's military career and later service as the second territorial governor of Arkansas. It will analyze the most controversial decisions of his time as the Right Division commander at Plattsburg

and later while in command of the Northern Army on the Niagara Peninsula. The chapter will assess Izard's generalship in terms of the essential qualities of generalship demonstrated by the most successful and innovative military commanders. The goal is to weigh the totality of Izard's military career and demonstrated leadership to determine whether history has unfairly judged one of the most misunderstood and maligned figures of the War of 1812.

Military Retirement and Post War Service

When Monroe refused to accept Izard's offer to resign following the negative press over the decision to abandon Fort Erie, he granted the beleaguered general permission to travel to Washington D.C. for "a personal interview, and free and friendly communication."² Brigadier General Peter B. Porter was placed in command of the Niagara frontier while Izard was away. While travelling east, Izard inspected posts at Williamsville, Batavia, and the Genessee River and reported to Monroe that they were in good order and troops appeared healthy. He ordered companies of the 6th and 29th infantry to reinforce General Alexander Macomb's position on Lake Champlain and forwarded a detachment of the 15th infantry to Whitehall, New York.³

Izard informed Monroe of his intention to take advantage of the opportunity to spend a few days with his family in Philadelphia while en route to the capital. While there, Monroe informed Izard of Senate ratification of the Treaty of Ghent and advised him to remain with his family until further orders. Monroe made it clear that he would still retain command of the 9th Military District despite his absence. "The peace which has just taken place lessens the motive for your hastening back to take the command you have hitherto had on the frontier; though that (except in directing General Macomb to

report to this department and, in your absence, to General Brown) remains under you as heretofore.”⁴

With the nation no longer at war, the Senate immediately began the process of reducing the size of the army to pre-conflict levels. Monroe passionately argued for maintaining a sizeable force to man coastal fortifications and deter any future British or Spanish aggression. Only partially persuaded by his appeal, Congress fixed the army’s authorization at 12,383 officers and men.⁵ The post-war army would consist of 10,000 infantry, rifles, and artillery, with dragoons eliminated due to a perceived lack of usefulness. The Corps of Engineers and staff corps would comprise the remainder of the army. Congress then directed the army to retain two major generals and four brigadiers. Madison selected his most successful battlefield commanders, Andrew Jackson and Jacob Brown, for retention as the army’s two major generals while Edmund P. Gaines, Winfield Scott, Alexander Macomb, and Eleazar W. Ripley would serve as the army’s four brigadier generals. Major General George Izard was honorably discharged from the army on June 15, 1815, and he returned home to Philadelphia.

Izard attempted to smooth over his strained relationship with Brown, one of his most vocal critics, before leaving the service. “It will give me real pleasure to see you at my fireside, should business, fame or amusement call you to Pennsylvania.”⁶

Unfortunately, Izard’s retirement did not quell the contempt heaped upon him by disgruntled former officers and the press. He abhorred using the newspapers to make personal attacks against others and refused to confront his detractors publicly. Instead, in 1816 Izard published all of his correspondence with the War Department while in command of the Right Division. His unedited records demonstrated Secretary of War

Armstrong's mismanagement of 1814 operations in the Northern Theater and appeared to have diffused the crisis.

Izard stayed out of public life until Monroe convinced him to accept an appointment to serve as governor of the Arkansas Territory. On March 4, 1825, he accepted the position offered to him by President John Quincy Adams and moved to Little Rock. Demonstrating his superior organizational skills, Izard enacted measures to make the local government more efficient, held public officials accountable, and ensured that removal of Choctaws and Cherokees from Arkansas occurred without friction.⁷ He then focused his attention on improving the territory's militia. In his attempts to improve the organization, Izard issued general orders calling for newly appointed officers to report to Fort Towson or the adjutant general's office in Little Rock and solicited the War Department to send weapons and ammunition.⁸ After serving in this capacity for four years, George Izard died in office on November 28, 1828 at the age of 53.

Enduring Criticism of Cumberland Head

Despite Izard's efforts to transform the Right Division into a cohesive military force and block a British invasion that he accurately predicted, his decision to fortify Cumberland Head drew the most interest from contemporaries and early historians. In correspondence dated June 30 and July 2, Armstrong informed Izard that if the Secretary of the Navy would not augment the fleet on Lake Champlain then the task of fortifying the narrows where the Richelieu River emptied into the lake would fall to the army.⁹ Citing a difference in opinion over the advantages of each location, he gave Izard the option of occupying Rouse's Point, the mouth of the Lacole River, or Ash Island. In his reply, Izard informed the Secretary of War that the latter two "are in the occupation of the

enemy, strongly fortified, and affording a cover for their fleet, which is moored under batteries at those places.”¹⁰ He acknowledged that Rouse’s Point would serve as an ideal location to command passage into the lake, but there was no room for defensive works in the rear and the presence of a sizeable British force at Lacole Mill would make its occupation hazardous to its garrison. Izard determined in favor of fortifying Cumberland Head because of its proximity to Plattsburg, where he planned to construct defensive positions, and “the protection it may afford in combination with the opposite shore of Grande Isle to our naval force.”

Armstrong published a two-volume book after the war attempting to shift the blame for his many poor decisions from himself to his military commanders. In this attempt to rehabilitate his reputation long after many of the principal actors had died, he severely criticized Izard’s decision to fortify Cumberland Head over Rouse’s Point.¹¹ Izard’s detractors have repeated Armstrong’s claims as evidence of the general’s poor judgment. Armstrong argued that “a battery on *Cumberland Head* could not have prevented the passage of an enemy’s fleet into Lake Champlain, unless by some error on the part of the naval commander.” Izard never claimed that the works on Cumberland Head were intended to prevent the British from entering the lake, merely to provide support for Macdonough’s flotilla in conjunction with a second fortification across the water on Grande Isle.

For reasons unknown to us today, this second fortification was never constructed. Izard may have abandoned the project on Grande Isle for a lack of time or the deficiency in heavy artillery, which he complained about to no relief.¹² Often described as “useless”, a more accurate description for the fort on Cumberland Head is “unused”. Armstrong left

Plattsburg so denuded of troops that Macomb had to abandon the post to consolidate his forces. A properly resourced and manned fortification as originally intended may have provided the American ships with fire support when the British flotilla “appeared in sight round Cumberland Head.”¹³ Armstrong went on to offer passages from letters he claims to have received from Totten and Swift as proof that the enemy at Lacolle would not have posed a significant threat to a garrison at Rouse’s Point and small defensive works were possible at that location. Even if the letters were an accurate representation of Swift and Totten’s opinion on the subject, a few points should be considered.¹⁴

On June 25, 1814, Izard submitted General Thomas A. Smith’s report that 5,550 British troops were at Lacolle.¹⁵ The general kept receiving reports from his commanders in the field, informants, and deserters throughout the summer indicating that enemy forces in the area were increasing. Additionally, a letter from Henry Bathurst, British Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, to Sir George Prevost confirms that the British government was sending a force of 10,000 troops to Quebec and considered Lake Champlain a strategic objective.¹⁶ Debating the veracity of Izard’s claim that a large British force was massing near Lacolle is puzzling given the fact that they invaded New York three months later. Izard is also criticized for his decision to go against the professional advice of Totten in fortifying Cumberland Head over another location. Without judging the accuracy of either assessment, training as a military engineer also qualified Izard to form his own opinion. Macomb never tested the utility of this particular fortification, but Izard’s selection of the three sites along the Saranac River enabled Macomb to successfully defend Plattsburg.

Assessment of Izard's Performance

Early chroniclers of the events at Niagara have labeled Izard's actions as the product of cowardice or incompetence, although nothing in his record could substantiate either charge.¹⁷ One of the goals of this study is to determine whether Izard had a risk-averse nature that precluded him from achieving theater strategic and operational goals. Strategy identifies the objectives (ends) to achieve, providing boundaries and guidance through strategic concepts (ways), and prescribing the resources (means) the state will make available for mission accomplishment.¹⁸ An impartial review of Izard's performance at Plattsburg and the Niagara frontier demonstrates that his actions furthered national interests.

As articulated by President Madison, the 1814 Northern Theater campaign strategy called for Izard to make a demonstration towards Montreal to divert attention away from the Niagara frontier while Brown attacked to seize Burlington Heights, thus cutting British supply lines to the west.¹⁹ Madison's cabinet members recognized, however, that if Chauncey did not defeat Commodore Sir James Yeo on Lake Ontario then Brown could not move on to York or Kingston. Izard furthered strategic and operational goals in his assigned area of operations by defending the Richelieu-Champlain corridor through the construction of fortifications at Plattsburg and contributing forces to support Macdonough on Lake Champlain. Taken together, these activities prevented the British from sending additional reinforcements to defend Upper Canada and contributed to the September 1814 land and sea victory at Plattsburg.

Circumstances surrounding Izard's arrival in Niagara and his decision to abandon the only American gains in Canada have complicated prior attempts to assess his

contribution to the overall war effort. Arrival of the Right Division on the Niagara Peninsula kept Drummond's attention fixed on checking the American advance into the region. Faced with an enemy force that doubled his own in number, he implored Yeo to risk engagement with Chauncey to provide reinforcements and supplies from Kingston. "I cannot refrain from observing that if I had the 90th and one other strong and effective regiment (which can so well be spared) I am fully of the opinion that I should have it now in my power to strike a blow which would not only give immediate tranquility to this province but go far towards finishing the war in Upper Canada."²⁰ Izard's decision to bring the Right Division to the Niagara frontier furthered American goals by siphoning off reinforcements and supplies that would have bolstered British efforts further west.

The Right Division arrived in Niagara without heavy artillery, naval support, and with winter rapidly approaching. Izard correctly surmised that Drummond would not abandon his fortified position behind the Chippewa and any attempt to force him out would result in heavy casualties.²¹ With a view towards conserving the fighting strength of his division, Izard refused to directly assault the British line. Izard agreed to Brown's plan of outflanking Drummond and his troops began cutting a usable trail towards Lyon's Creek. However, when Yeo blockaded Chauncey in Sackett's Harbor it left Izard in enemy territory without naval or logistical support, severely limiting his ability to retain any gains he should acquire on the Niagara Peninsula. Sacrificing his men in an attempt to dislodge Drummond from the Chippewa and pursuing him to Fort George and Burlington Heights would ultimately be fruitless. On that day, Izard abandoned the plan to outflank the British and decided to end the campaign should his display of force before their defensive works not compel Drummond to give battle.

Brown's plan to outflank Drummond's defensive position on the Chippewa was not without merit. A deep turning movement could have resulted in two possible outcomes. First, Drummond would feel compelled to abandon his position by the threat to his support areas and quickly withdraw to the shelter of Fort George. Second, the Northern Army would catch Drummond en route and possibly destroy his force before it reached the safety of the fort. Either outcome would have limited British freedom of action across the Niagara River and altered the balance of power on the peninsula in the American's favor. The potential benefits of this more limited objective, as opposed to proceeding on to Burlington Heights, would have been worth the risk.

The operational goals of the Niagara campaign were flawed from the outset as its success depended entirely on Chauncey defeating Yeo on Lake Ontario. Demonstrating the president's and his cabinet's lack of foresight, they never directed Chauncey to seek out Yeo or to cooperate with Brown. Armstrong and Brown assumed that the commodore would coordinate his efforts with the army but Chauncey would not do so if it interfered with his primary mission.

I professed to feel it my duty as well as inclination to afford every assistance in my power to the army, and to co-operate with it whenever it could be done without losing sight of the great object for which this fleet had been created—to wit, the capture or destruction of the enemy's fleet; but this was a primary object, would be first attempted, and that you must not expect the fleet at the head of the lake unless that of the enemy should induce us to follow him there.²²

Chauncey's methodical approach and risk-averse nature meant that a decisive naval battle never took place.²³ Armstrong recognized the importance of naval supremacy to the success of operations on the Niagara Peninsula. For example, when he directed Brigadier General Scott to consider marching directly on Burlington Heights, Armstrong advised him to return to the shore of Lake Erie should the British gain ascendancy on Lake

Ontario.²⁴ Izard's decision to withdraw his forces from Canada was consistent with this guidance.

Izard's decisions while leading the Northern Army frustrated the impulsive Brown to the point where a bitter quarrel developed between the two division commanders. Brown's desire to destroy Drummond's forces as a short-term tactical expedient, regardless of the cost in lives and future combat power, suggested a narrower conception of war.²⁵ More strategically-oriented, Izard focused on the preservation of American forces and not the destruction of Drummond's. Based on his assessment of the situation, a costly victory over the British would not significantly improve the American position in Canada and could potentially diminish the army as a strategic asset in the 1815 campaign. Izard made the prudent decision to withdraw his force back to the American shore and put in to winter quarters even though he recognized that "much must be expected from me."²⁶ A letter published in the *Newburyport Herald* defending his actions noted, "He was the best judge, and in the opening of the next year he will have entire the finest body of men, and the best blood of the army in commission, for any objective of the war."²⁷ Although Izard's career was not blessed with victory in battle, hence his retirement, he left the forces in the 9th Military District in excellent condition to take up the fight in 1815.

An assessment of General Izard's leadership attributes and competencies demonstrates his evolution from a direct level leader as a company commander at Fort Pinkney to a strategic level leader as the commander of the Right Division and Northern Army in the 9th Military District. Strategic leaders, according to the Army Leadership Requirements Model, require broad technical skills and mastery of strategic art. Strategic

art is defined as “the skillful formulation, coordination, and application of ends, ways, and means to promote and defend the national interest.”²⁸ As a formally trained engineer and regimental colonel of artillerists, Izard displayed his technical skills through preparation of defensive fortifications and ideas on the organization of artillery forces. He demonstrated his grasp of strategic art through his organizational and administrative skills in manning, training, and equipping American forces as well as his decisions in 1814 that served theater strategic goals. As a strategic leader on the Niagara Peninsula, Izard displayed an acute sense of timing by “knowing when to accept prudent risk and proceed vigorously or when to proceed incrementally,” testing the waters and moving forward.²⁹

If Major General Izard demonstrated so many desirable attributes and competencies of an army leader and displayed sound judgment as a division commander, why did so many observers consider his generalship on the Niagara Peninsula a failure? Army commanders in the early nineteenth century were expected to display an offensive spirit and aggressively engage the enemy in battle. Those who failed to do so, regardless of the circumstances, risked being labeled as a coward or prone to timidity. Izard recognized that Drummond would remain behind his defensive works on the Chippewa River and Brown’s suggestion to outflank their position was the only way to avoid a costly direct assault.³⁰ However, Izard’s interpretation of the strategic situation changed once he learned that Chauncey ceded control of Lake Ontario to Yeo. In his opinion, pursuing Drummond across the peninsula presented too great of a risk. Understanding the repercussions, Izard had the moral courage to follow his judgment and focus on

preserving the Northern Army for the defense of Sackett's Harbor and next year's offensive operations.

The U.S. Army's offensive spirit continues through the present and is embodied by the Soldier's Creed, stating "I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy, the enemies of the United States of America in close combat." Although nineteenth century interpretation of "gets results" for a successful commander exclusively meant victory in combat, current army doctrine takes a more nuanced approach. While consistently accomplishing missions is still the ultimate measure of an effective leader, today's organizational leaders must also demonstrate expertise in risk management in order to balance risk cost with mission benefits.³¹ When viewed through this lens and in the context of the fluid situation on the Niagara frontier in October 1814, Izard's decisions appear less like the actions of a timid or risk-averse commander and more like a strategic leader. Izard's record demonstrates that he did "get results" throughout his military career, but Armstrong's self-serving post-war criticism of his performance established a narrative that persisted long after the war.

Essential Qualities of Successful Generalship

Research has shown that leadership skills are learned and developed over the course of an individual's career through experience, education, and mentorship.³² Individuals must strive to improve their leadership abilities to reach their full potential. Critically examining the attributes of the most effective military commanders has revealed a number of leadership themes that are consistent over time. Through a historically-based exploration of leadership development, Laver and Matthews identified nine essential qualities of effective leadership, including: integrity, determination,

institutional leadership, cross-cultural leadership, charismatic leadership, visionary leadership, technical leadership, adaptive leadership, and exemplary followership.³³ Successful leaders often display many of these qualities and endeavor to develop as many as possible over the course of their careers.

One of the most important qualities among the most successful American general officers is character. General of the Army Dwight Eisenhower believed that “character in many ways is everything in leadership. It is made up of many things, but I would say character is really integrity.”³⁴ In the early nineteenth century, being considered a gentleman of integrity was highly prized by society. Integrity manifests itself through honoring personal commitments, financial matters, and political arrangements. The Army Values define integrity as doing what is right, legally and morally.³⁵ Leaders with integrity do the right thing because their personal values compel them to conduct themselves according to high moral standards. Izard consistently demonstrated this key leadership quality during the War of 1812.

Izard demonstrated integrity through his refined view of warfare with regards to the conduct of sentries and destruction of private property. Major General Thomas Brisbane, commanding general of the British advance communicated with Izard to put an end to sentries sniping at one another. “I regret to learn that sentinels are fired at, as well as solitary individuals, which I never before heard of. If, therefore, you will abolish it on the part of your troops, I shall pledge myself for my own.”³⁶ In response to Brisbane’s letter, Izard assured the general that the practice of firing on sentinels was not commenced by American troops.

It will give me great satisfaction to see an end put to this savage and unsoldier-like species of warfare. Young as we are in war, we know that those who fight their country's battles may, without departing from duty, be governed towards its enemies by a sense of humanity,--and that courtesy is not incompatible with zeal for the service of our government. Disposed to esteem the brave already distinguished by honourable and successful military exploits, we shall endeavour to inspire them with a similar sentiment for troops, whose character has been misunderstood, and whose conduct greatly misrepresented.³⁷

General Drummond noted in his report to Prevost on Izard's movement from Fort Erie to Cook's Mills that there were no breaches of conduct, "he has been studiously cautious in abstaining from his burning and plundering system—probably admonished by the retaliation inflicted at Washington and on the coast."³⁸ Although Drummond believed Izard's conduct was due to a desire to prevent further retaliation, it was consistent with his previous actions and more likely reflects his temperament, integrity, and European military training.

Charismatic leaders have an ability to inspire and influence their subordinates on an emotional and individual level.³⁹ This essential quality of leadership involves having genuine concern for the welfare of subordinates and leading from the front. The concept of looking after one's troops took root in America during the Revolutionary War. Baron von Steuben advised that commanders should "gain the love of his men by treating them with every possible kindness and humanity."⁴⁰ General officers that shield their subordinates, as much as possible, from the unnecessary troubles and deprivations of military life can effectively motivate soldiers to endure hardships and put their lives in harm's way when called upon. Izard displayed a genuine concern for the health and well-being of troops under his command throughout his career.

As colonel of the Second Regiment of Artillery, he constantly complained to the War Department about substandard billeting and a lack of proper uniforms. Izard ensured

the wives and children of his soldiers were able to support themselves financially by recommending that a portion of the soldier's pay go directly to his family.⁴¹ Preserving the health of his soldiers was always a primary concern for Izard. He abhorred the "prodigious mortality occasioned by the ill-judged movements of the troops, at an inclement season, in this frightful climate,--and the diseases consequent upon the unlucky expedition to Lacole."⁴² To prevent the attrition he observed at Chateaguay and Lacole, Izard moved his division to the Niagara Peninsula at a measured pace. While serving at Plattsburg, he worked with the senior hospital surgeon to prevent the spread of smallpox when a case occurred in the cantonment. "Every precaution is taking to prevent infection—and there not being any kine pox matter in this part of the country, an express has been sent to Albany for the purpose of procuring some. It is unfortunate that this was not done by the proper department some weeks ago."⁴³

Institutional leaders have the ability to deduce lessons learned and grasp organizational values that affect innovation.⁴⁴ General George C. Marshall is recognized as the quintessential institutional leader. He used his management skills to successfully raise, modernize, and train America's army for World War II. Marshall's administrative philosophy of simplicity, flexibility, and efficiency allowed him to improve communication and coordination between government branches, military services, and army departments.⁴⁵ Rapid expansion of the armed forces caused by the outbreak of World War II resulted in massive inefficiencies at the War Department. Since the War of 1812, the U.S. Government has struggled to cope with the increased administrative and logistical workload due to a lack of manpower and expertise.⁴⁶

Izard quickly established himself as an institutional leader when he assumed command of the Second Regiment of Artillery. He recognized that many of the challenges facing the artillery service resulted from a lack of senior leadership coordinating the service. Izard proposed major structural changes through the establishment of a separate Corps of Artillery and uniform composition of units, tactics, and combined arms training.⁴⁷ After observing firsthand how government inefficiency negatively impacted the war effort, he stressed the need for reform.

Much is to be done in every department of the army. System must be enforced in the various branches of Ordnance, Clothing, Quartermaster's, Surgeon's and Pay departments. Incalculable expense is produced by the present disorganized state of things. The staff of the army is on a very unpleasant footing. No regular course of discipline, and instruction is followed by the troops. Much may be done in the next five or six months; but it must be quickly commenced, to be of permanent advantage.⁴⁸

Forward thinking is an essential characteristic for strategic leaders as they seek to determine what is important for their organization now and what will be important in the future.⁴⁹ Given Izard's proclivity towards organizational and administrative reforms, his retention in the post-war military would have resulted in much needed improvement in every department of the army.

Institutional leaders have the potential to increase operational efficiency, which translates to higher tactical efficiency. Successful generalship requires a prepared mind to recognize and seize upon opportunities to increase institutional efficiency. The most accomplished American general officers are voracious readers, particularly history and biography.⁵⁰ Studying history enables leaders to recreate battles and campaigns in their mind to get an idea of the complex interplay of decisions, actions, and events that occur in a real world setting.⁵¹ Izard understood the value of reading books as a junior officer

and maintained a collection of books and charts for personal study.⁵² He continued to challenge himself intellectually for the rest of his life through the American Philosophical Society. Izard's love of learning enabled him to cultivate an agile mind capable of solving the many complex organizational problems he faced during the war and as the territorial governor of Arkansas.

Carl von Clausewitz observed that the uncertainty and complexity of combat required commanders with intellect, courage, and determination. Demonstrating these traits represents the hallmarks of adaptive leadership and enables a leader to adapt to the unpredictable environment of combat.⁵³ Lieutenant General Harold G. "Hal" Moore displayed the characteristics of adaptive leadership while a lieutenant colonel at the Battle of Ia Drang Valley, November 14-16, 1965. Moore's combat experience and early preparation through reading military history and battlefield visits enabled him to adjust to the reality of the battle his unit was facing. History taught him that the most effective military commanders lead from the front.

Upon encountering British forces along the Chateauguay River in 1813, Izard would lead untested troops into an uncertain combat environment. Acting as a diversion for Colonel Robert Purdy's 1st Brigade, Izard and a portion of his brigade marched down the road on the left bank to attack enemy defensive positions. He had to adapt to the difficult terrain features in order to deploy the 10th Infantry in line while under fire.⁵⁴ When the rest of Izard's brigade arrived on the battlefield he successfully maneuvered his entire force in front of the British defensive position and made adjustments as the situation required. Adaptive leadership allowed him to maintain his brigade as a cohesive force through terrain obstacles and musket volleys from an entrenched enemy. Izard's

ability to adapt to complex situations stems from his frequent visits with his subordinates. A vital component of effective generalship, visiting the soldiers provides a leader with “feel” or “sixth sense” about their command.⁵⁵ Gaining better situational awareness of conditions in the field enables a leader to make better decisions. Izard reviewed the living conditions of recruits, commissioned and inspected defensive works, and visited troop detachments throughout the 9th Military District.⁵⁶ These actions allowed him to accurately assess the dire position of his division in Plattsburg and prepare accordingly.⁵⁷

In sum, exceptional organizational skills and strategic leadership were the defining characteristics of George Izard’s evolution as a military leader. A review of his career reveals his effectiveness at the regimental, brigade, and division level and successful transition from direct, through organizational, and to strategic leadership. According to the Army Leadership Requirements Model, Izard’s actions displayed the attributes and competencies that current doctrine describes as the basis of today’s army leadership. His training accomplishments, as impressive as the celebrated achievements of Winfield Scott, established highly effective units that distinguished themselves during the war. While his record suggests he was not as an aggressive battlefield commander as Brown and Scott, volunteering for a direct fire fight on enemy defenses at the Battle of Chateauguay dispels Izard’s post-war characterization of being timid or risk-averse.

A more balanced review of his war record reveals that his actions at Plattsburg and the Niagara Peninsula furthered theater strategic and operational goals. Izard’s interpretation of the situation at Niagara differed from Brown’s and ultimately influenced his decision to abandon a non-strategically-focused objective and close the 1814 campaign. By refusing to defend himself publicly, the criticism of this one facet of his

otherwise commendable performance endured. Over time, the negative opinion of Izard has softened as the breadth and depth of Armstrong's incompetence as the Secretary of War was revealed by historians. To judge Izard's career based on a perceived failure to achieve victory on the Niagara Peninsula without first considering his situation ignores the many accomplishments of one of the most competent and professional military leaders of the early American republic.

Relevance to the Modern U.S. Army

Following the War of 1812, policymakers struggled with how to reorganize the army to meet the demands of coastal and frontier defense while operating in a constrained fiscal environment. Congress reduced the size of the standing army and left it to President Madison to determine who would stay and who would go.⁵⁸ He decided to base retention decisions on merit rather than seniority, setting the precedent for future selections. Today's military is facing similar problems as it grapples with the drawdown of forces following the end of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and how to effectively manage its remaining talent. According to the 2014 U.S. Army Operating Concept, technological advances, changing geopolitical landscape, and security challenges will require the military to innovate to ensure that forces can prevent, deter, or win future armed conflicts.⁵⁹ Innovation begins with the advancement of army officers with the right set of skills to succeed at the strategic level.

Winning for the United States occurs at the strategic level and must involve the application of multiple elements of national power. Adaptive and agile leaders who can operate in today's complex environment are needed to mitigate the risk of unpredicted developments that can confound and negate national defense strategy.

To mitigate strategic surprise, the Army must continue to emphasize adaptability in leaders, units, and institutions that can learn and innovate while fighting. Innovative and adaptive leaders, educated and trained in the Profession of Arms, employ regionally aligned forces to gain and maintain situational understanding and increase their awareness of the changing character of warfare.⁶⁰

The increasing complexity of modern military missions, reliance on information systems, and advanced technology has placed a premium on general officers with well-developed intellectual skills. These skills are indispensable to senior leaders whose responsibilities have expanded to include politics and diplomacy, in addition to military affairs.⁶¹

Military history is replete with examples of officers who failed to make the transition from the tactical to the operational or strategic level. The skills and aptitudes displayed by a top performer in a direct leadership position might not serve them well in a higher level indirect leadership position. According to Lieutenant General Walter Ulmer (Ret.), “research shows convincingly how strengths that served well to accomplish the tactical tasks of early managerial years can become dysfunctional when individuals move to the strategic level.”⁶² To develop new skills that will meet the demands of a complex operational environment, the U.S. Army should encourage officers to seek broadening assignments and graduate education opportunities to cultivate the appropriate aptitude mix of strategic leaders among its future general officers.

¹ Barbuto, *Niagara 1814*, 319.

² Letter in the *Pittsburgh Mercury*, November 30, 1814. “What will be the fruits of his after meditations, no one will hazard an opinion, nor do they much care for, after the loss of nearly two thousand men, we are now where we started last June and should this act be committed as the individual responsibility of the commanding general, his sun is set, never to rise.” James Monroe to George Izard, January 8, 1815, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 134.

³ George Izard to James Monroe, February 11, 1815, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 136-137.

⁴ James Monroe to George Izard, February 22, 1815, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 137.

⁵ Barbuto, *Niagara 1814*, 322.

⁶ George Izard to Jacob Brown, December 28, 1814, quoted in Fredriksen, *A Tempered Sword, Untested, Part II*, 13.

⁷ Clara B. Eno, "Territorial Governors of Arkansas," *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 4, no. 4 (Winter 1945): 279-280.

⁸ Lonnie J. White, "Arkansas Territorial Politics, 1824-1827," *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 20, no. 1 (Spring 1961): 26-27.

⁹ John Armstrong to George Izard, June 30, 1814 and July 2, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 48, 51.

¹⁰ George Izard to John Armstrong, July 12, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 52-53.

¹¹ John Armstrong, *Notices of the War of 1812, Volume 2*, 118-123.

¹² George Izard to John Armstrong, July 12, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 52-53.

¹³ Alexander Macomb to John Armstrong, September 15, 1814, in *Official Letters of the Military and Naval Officers of the United States During the War with Great Britain*, 415-419.

¹⁴ With many of the officers who bore the brunt of Armstrong's criticism being deceased, very few people came forward to contest his interpretation of events. See Cyrenius Chapin, *Chapin's Review of Armstrong's Notices of the War of 1812* (Black Rock, AR: B. F. Adams, Printer-Advocate Office, 1836), III-IV.

¹⁵ George Izard to John Armstrong, June 25, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 35-40.

¹⁶ Henry Bathurst to George Prevost, June 3, 1814, quoted in Fitz-Enz, *Hacks, Sycophants, Adventurers, and Heroes*, 145-147.

¹⁷ John C. Fredriksen, "Niagara, 1814: The United States Army Quest for Tactical Parity in the War of 1812 and its Legacy" (PhD diss., Providence College, Ann Arbor, MI: Microfilms International, 1993), 273.

¹⁸ Harry R. Yarger, *Strategic Theory for the 21st Century: The Little Book on Big Strategy* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2006), 48.

- ¹⁹ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1814*, 14.
- ²⁰ Gordon Drummond to George Prevost, October 15, 1814, quoted in Barbuto, *Niagara 1814*, 294-295.
- ²¹ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1814*, 43.
- ²² Chauncey to Brown, August 10, 1814, transcribed in E. A. Cruikshank, *The Documentary History of the Campaign on the Niagara Frontier in 1814*, Part I, 129-130.
- ²³ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1814*, 56.
- ²⁴ Barbuto, *Niagara 1814*, 149.
- ²⁵ Fredriksen, *A Tempered Sword, Untested, Part II*, 10.
- ²⁶ George Izard to James Monroe, October 23, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 104-106.
- ²⁷ Anonymous letter published in the *Newburyport Herald*, November 23, 1814, quoted in Fredriksen, *Quest for Tactical Parity in the War of 1812*, 274.
- ²⁸ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-22, 11-7.
- ²⁹ Ibid., 11-10.
- ³⁰ Barbuto, *The Canadian Theater 1814*, 43.
- ³¹ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-22, 6-6.
- ³² Harry S. Laver and Jeffrey J. Matthews, "Introduction: Leadership for War and Peace," in *The Art of Command: Military Leadership from George Washington to Colin Powell*, eds. Harry S. Laver and Jeffrey J. Matthews (Reprint, Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2010), 1.
- ³³ Ibid., 2.
- ³⁴ Quoted in Edgar F. Puryear Jr., *American Generalship: Character is Everything: the Art of Command* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 2000), 5.
- ³⁵ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-22, 3-3.
- ³⁶ Thomas Brisbane to George Izard, August 16, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 141.
- ³⁷ George Izard to Thomas Brisbane, August 17, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 142.

³⁸ Gordon Drummond to George Prevost, October 20, 1814, quoted in Barbuto, *Niagara 1814*, 301.

³⁹ John T. Hoffman, "Charismatic Leadership: Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller," in *The Art of Command*, 125-126.

⁴⁰ Henry J. Osterhoudt, "Towards Organized Disorder: The Evolution of U.S. Army Assault Tactics, 1778-1919" (MA diss., Duke University, Fort Belvoir, VA, Defense Technical Information Center, 1980), 10.

⁴¹ National Archives and Records Administration, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Main Series, 1801-1870; December 1812-May 1814, RG107, M221, Roll 54, George Izard to James Monroe, January 21, 1813.

⁴² George Izard to John Armstrong, June 25, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 38-39.

⁴³ Kinepox was a cowpox vaccine used in early America to prevent smallpox infection. George Izard to John Armstrong, June 1, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 21-22.

⁴⁴ Larry I. Bland, "Institutional Leadership: George C. Marshall," in *The Art of Command*, 61-62.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 86.

⁴⁶ Mahon, *The War of 1812*, 38.

⁴⁷ National Archives and Records Administration, Letters Received by the Secretary of War, 1801-1870, George Izard to William Eustis, July 13, 1812.

⁴⁸ George Izard to James Monroe, November 8, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 114-116.

⁴⁹ Headquarters, Department of the Army, ADRP 6-22, 11-71.

⁵⁰ Puryear, *American Generalship*, 142.

⁵¹ Richard H. Sinnreich, "Awkward Partners: Military History and American Military Education," in *Past as Prologue: The Importance of History to the Military Profession*, eds. Williamson Murray and Richard H. Sinnreich (Cambridge: University of Cambridge, 2006), 70.

⁵² Swift, *The Memoirs of Gen. Joseph Gardner Swift*, 35.

⁵³ H. R. McMaster, "Adaptive Leadership: Harold G. "Hal" Moore," in *The Art of Command*, 2010, 210-212.

⁵⁴ Fredriksen, *The War of 1812 in Northern New York*, 188.

⁵⁵ Puryear, *American Generalship*, 77.

⁵⁶ George Izard to James Monroe, February 11, 1815, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 136-137.

⁵⁷ George Izard to John Armstrong, August 11, 1814, quoted in Izard, *Official Correspondence with the Department of War*, 65-67.

⁵⁸ Barbuto, *Niagara 1814*, 322-323.

⁵⁹ Headquarters, Department of the Army, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Pamphlet 525-3-1, *The U.S. Army Operating Concept: Win in a Complex World* (Washington, DC:Government Printing Office, 2014), 8.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁶¹ Lloyd J. Matthews, "The Uniformed Intellectual and His Place in American Arms—Part II: The Effects of Anti-intellectualism on the Army Profession Today," *Army Magazine* 52, no. 8 (August 2002): 35.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 34.

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